

Glory-Seeking: A Timeless and Puzzling Craving of the Human Soul

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BOSTON COLLEGE

GLORY-SEEKING: A TIMELESS AND
PUZZLING CRAVING OF THE HUMAN SOUL

A Senior Honors Thesis

Submitted to

The College of Arts and Sciences

Philosophy Department

By

ERIC MARTURANO

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ABSTRACT

Glory-seeking: A Timeless & Puzzling Craving of the Human Soul

Written by: Eric Marturano

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Philosophers throughout the ages have grappled with the concept of glory-seeking and have offered many different references, analyses, insights, and explanations. Three great thinkers in particular stand out above the rest: Plato, Thomas Hobbes, and Jean-Paul Sartre. While these three minds span from circa 420 BC all the way up to 1980 AD, they all would agree that glory-seeking certainly matters – they would most likely argue over the following: In what way?

For Plato, glory-seeking is an inherent part of the human soul. It matters because it is an essential part of our being. Plato's model for the soul found in *The Republic* as well as a comparable illustration in the *Phaedrus* expresses this claim most thoroughly. Additional support for the idea of glory-seeking being an existing precondition of humanity can be found in other ancient works as well, most notably Homer's *Iliad*. A current example is professional athletes in the NFL risking their earning potential in order to play injured.

For Hobbes, glory-seeking is a tool to be used for social advantage. It matters because it can be used for advantage and power. Chapters X and XIII in *The Leviathan* most critically highlight this sentiment. Further support for the idea of glory-seeking being a weapon in the self-made man's arsenal can be found in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*. The largest modern-day example is celebrity culture: the news and entertainment factory so woven into current American culture, which is particularly embodied by the public behavior and lyrics of hip-hop artist Kanye West.

For Sartre, glory-seeking provides an answer to existential angst. It matters because it helps us believe that we matter. Sartre's philosophical work, *Being and Nothingness*, as well as his existential novel, *Nausea*, provide ample evidence of this notion. More support for the idea of glory-seeking as a method of coping with the awareness one's own existence can be found in Søren Kierkegaard's *The Present Age*. Contemporary manifestations include the incessant self-promotion and self-presentation found on social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.

The goal of this work is to first investigate glory-seeking for Plato, Hobbes, and Sartre and analyze what each thinker has to say on the matter. After that, modern examples and additional input from other relevant philosophers will be assessed within the overall context of glory-seeking for Plato, Hobbes, and Sartre. Finally, after everything has been considered, I will attempt to synthesize all that has been presented thus far while answering the question: Why does glory-seeking matter?

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About the Author

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CHAPTER ONE

What is *Thumos* & Why Does Glory Matter?

Not too long ago, I went out to a bar with some friends on a Thursday night. As a college senior who had recently turned twenty-one and grew up hearing various adults in my life reminisce about the glory of their “college years,” I was excited to finally have a few drinks with my fellow students in a public space and maybe even create a few memories of my own. Unlike those belonging to an older generation, however, memories from that night (and any other night out, for that matter) will exist not only as rosy, happy, fuzzy tales drawn from the cobwebs of my mind, but also (and eternally) as a series of crisply Instagrammed selfies, cleverly-quipped Tweets, and snobbishly touted Facebook check-ins occupying a personally public space on the worldwide web. Well, at least that’s how it will be on my *friends’* timelines. I’ve never really been much for selfies.

I find myself constantly asking why (perhaps as a result of studying philosophy?). Usually that “why” is something along the lines of “Why the hell would you take a selfie?” or “Why would a football player play injured and risk ruining his small window of time to earn money?” or “Why would anyone actually want be famous?” or “What exactly is a reputation?” or “Why do people get mad if you fudge their job title?” I’ve come to notice most of my wondering points back to a central question: Why does glory-seeking matter?

One central element to glory-seeking is the concept of ‘*thumos*.’ It’s a pretty uncommon term – it’s Greek, actually –and according to its most famous user, Plato,

thumos means “the passionate or spirited element”¹ of the human soul. According to Plato,² the human soul is divided into three parts: the appetitive, the spirited (*thumos*), and the rational. It is the job of the rational portion to choose how to quench the material, tangible appetites as well as the immaterial, intangible passions. There is an obvious logic to the appetitive portion of the soul, of course. Humans have natural needs – such as those for food, shelter, clothing, and the means (money) to acquire these basic necessities – and thus a natural desire to satisfy them.

However, the spirited portion of the soul – the one that is fueled by *thumos* and seeks glory – is more abstract and certainly more puzzling. There is little logic for its existence and, quite often, it is problematic either by itself or in conflict with the goals of the appetitive portion of the soul. After all, what self-protecting, rational-minded being would dive on a grenade simply out of duty or the honor of being remembered as a hero by those whom he or she saved? Likewise, where is the personal and tangible value in becoming a religious or political martyr? Human beings have clearly been acting out of something other than appetite or reason since the beginning of time – but why? Does glory really matter this much to us? Is there any possible explanation for such spirit-driven behavior?

¹ Plato. *The Republic*, Cohen, S. Marc., Patricia Curd, and C. Reeve. "Republic." *Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy: from Thales to Aristotle*. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Pub., 2005. Pg. 331-578. Print .Book IV (440a-440d).

² Ibid, Book IV, Passim

CHAPTER TWO

Different Dealings of the Spirit: Plato, Hobbes, and Sartre Then & Now

Philosophers throughout the ages have grappled with glory-seeking and have offered many different references, analyses, insights, and explanations. Three great thinkers in particular stand out above the rest: Plato, Thomas Hobbes, and Jean-Paul Sartre. While these three minds span from circa 420 BC all the way up to 1980 AD, they all would agree that glory-seeking certainly matters but they would most likely argue over the following: In what way?

For Plato, glory-seeking is an inherent part of the human soul. It matters because it is an essential part of our being. Plato's model for the soul, found in *The Republic*, as well as a comparable illustration in the *Phaedrus*, expresses this claim most thoroughly. Additional support for the idea of glory-seeking being an existing precondition of humanity can be found in other ancient works as well, most notably Homer's *Iliad*. A current example is professional athletes in the NFL risking their earning potential in order to play injured.

For Hobbes, glory-seeking is a tool to be used for social advantage. It matters because it can be used for advantage and power. Chapters X and XIII in *The Leviathan* most critically highlight this sentiment. Further support for the idea of glory-seeking being a weapon in the self-made man's arsenal can be found in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*. The modern-day reflection of this idea is celebrity culture: the news and entertainment factory so woven into current American culture,

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The goal of this work is to first investigate glory-seeking for Plato, Hobbes, and Sartre and analyze what each thinker has to say on the matter. After that, modern examples and additional input from other relevant philosophers will be assessed within the overall context of glory-seeking provided by Plato, Hobbes, and Sartre. Finally, I will attempt to synthesize all that has been presented thus far in order to answer the following question: Why does glory-seeking matter?

CHAPTER THREE

Glory-seeking as an Inherent Part of the Human Condition I: Plato

What about an honor-lover? Doesn't he think that the pleasure of making money is vulgar and that the pleasure of learning – except insofar as it brings him honor – is smoke and nonsense? –

Plato, *The Republic* (Book IX, 581d)

A natural place to begin when discussing glory-seeking is with Plato's *Republic*, particularly the model of the tripartite soul. *The Republic* itself is divided into ten books, each being a series of dialectic arguments and sub-arguments between Socrates and a variety of other ancient Greeks as they search for the true meaning of justice and the model for an ideal community. These dialogues often illuminate other concepts as well – most notably the idea of tripartite soul and, of course, its glory-seeking portion, *thumos*. For Plato, the spirited portion of our soul (*thumos*) – along with the appetitive (*eros* and/or *epithumétés*) and the rational (*logos*) portions – is an inherent part of our being. It is a precondition of what it means to be human. Through careful analysis of the dialogues within Plato's *Republic*, it soon becomes apparent that one reason glory-seeking matters is because it is an inescapable part of the human condition – not only on the individual level, but as a manifest force in the socio-political context as well.

Particularly, Book I, Book IV, and Book IX of *The Republic* offer insight regarding glory-seeking and its intrinsic place within the human condition. In Book I, the dialogue between Socrates and Thrasymachus reveals many “thumotic” features of Thrasymachus and provides an example of how innate glory-seeking can affect one's behavior and outlook on life in both an individual and social context. In Book IV, a

discussion on the ideal city leads to the model of the tripartite soul – the appetitive, the spirited (*thumos*), and the rational – and how that individual, intrinsic structure corresponds to a political city divided into three corresponding classes – producers, guardians (*thumos*), and rulers, respectively. Finally, in Book IX, Socrates, in an effort to argue for the superiority of the life of the philosopher in a society, assesses both the money-lover and the honor-lover and how the inescapable flame of *thumos* burning from within the soul fuels the actions of the honor-lover. Thus, through examination of Plato's *Republic*, it becomes clear that glory-seeking matters because it is an inherent part of the human condition and carries importance for both individual and socio-political reasons.

In Book I of *The Republic*, the discussion between Socrates and Thrasymachus exposes some thumotic features of Thrasymachus, which consequently illuminate how glory-seeking from within an individual's soul can become manifest in that individual's being. There are a four distinct pieces of evidence within the dialogues in Book I connecting Thrasymachus to *thumos*, as J.R.S Wilson summarizes:

First, images used in relation to Thrasymachus are also used in relation to the *thumos*, establishing a symbolic connection which can hardly be coincidental. Secondly, the temper that Thrasymachus displays and his argumentative impulse and style are characteristic of *thumos* in its pathological aspect. Thirdly, Thrasymachus interprets Socrates' motives as if these too sprang from *thumos*. Fourthly, the substance of what he says – his account of justice and the view of human reality which underlies it – is infused with thumoeidic features.³

The first point Wilson makes regards the descriptive – and decidedly, thumotic – nature of the words and images Plato invokes to characterize Thrasymachus as he engages in dialogue with Socrates over the concept of justice. Thrasymachus's very entrance into the

³ Wilson, J.R.S. "Thrasymachus and the Thumos: A Further Case of Prolepsis in Republic I." *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series, Vol. 45, No. 1 (1995), pp. 58-67. Cambridge University Press. pg. 58-59.

discussion comes from a slow boil in which “he couldn’t keep quiet any longer” and “coiled himself up like a wild beast about to spring, and he hurled himself at [Socrates and Polemarchus] as if to tear [them] to pieces” (336b). Plato later compares Thrasymachus to a lion, as, through the voice of Socrates, he quips, “Do you think that I’m crazy enough to try to shave a lion or to bear false witness against Thrasymachus?” (341b). Both of these primal, thumotic images that Plato uses in his depiction of Thrasymachus – a coiled beast ready to strike and a formidable lion – imply that glory-seeking is an natural (and possibly animalistic) condition that exhibits itself in an individual’s character and behavior.

Additionally, Thrasymachus’s temper and argumentative style, his interpretations of Socrates’s motives, and the substance of what he actually says regarding justice are all reflective of the glory-seeking within his being.⁴ Perhaps the most reflective element of the swollen *thumos* within Thrasymachus is that at one point Socrates says that “it was obvious that Thrasymachus thought he had a fine answer and that he wanted to earn [the onlooker’s] admiration by giving it” (338a). Wilson elucidates the implications of this critical passage:

For Thrasymachus, victory appears to be all-important. The dialogue in which he is engaged is a contest. He is out both to win that contest and to win credit in the eyes of those observing it. This thumoeidic approach to argument will be demonstrated at its clearest when...we consider the repeated and almost desperate resistance which Thrasymachus puts up before conceding the points made against him by Socrates. When at the climax of these exchanges he finds himself unable to rebut Socrates' proof that the just man is also good and wise, he is shamed, and, for the first time in Socrates' experience, blushes (350d). Shame, like anger, is a feeling rooted in *thumos*.⁵

⁴ Ibid, pg. 60.

⁵ Ibid, pg. 61.

Thrasymachus's interpretations of Socrates's motives are also indicative of Plato's view of glory-seeking being an inescapable part of the human condition. Upon joining the conversation, Thrasymachus almost immediately accuses Socrates of "asking questions and then refuting answers simply to satisfy [his] competitiveness or love of honor" (336c) and then later assumes that Socrates is trying simply to win an argument, proudly claiming that Socrates will "never be able to overpower [him] in an argument" (341b). Moreover, Thrasymachus attempts to shame Socrates rather than answering his questions – asking if he still has a "wet nurse" who lets him run around with a "snotty nose" (343a) and later offers to take his argument and aggressively "pour it into [Socrates's] very soul" (345b). Such an insult is meant to provoke the *thumos* within Socrates, and the assumption that it would indeed offend Socrates is natural for the thumotic Thrasymachus. Plato recognizes glory-seeking as innate enough as to have its embodiment, Thrasymachus, project his own honor-driven motivations onto Socrates, who, for Plato, is in actuality driven by the truth-seeking part of soul, the rational (*logos*). It is in this way that glory-seeking informs not only how Thrasymachus behaves, but how he views other individuals and their behaviors as well.

Finally, the very content of Thrasymachus's argument for justice shows how glory-seeking is an inherent part of an individual's being. Thrasymachus's definition of justice, of course, as an individual driven primarily by *thumos*, is "the advantage of the stronger" (339a). As Wilson notes, "one of the characteristic desires attributed to *thumos*

is the desire for power or domination over others”⁶ – a dichotomy of strong and weak, ruler and ruled. Wilson reasons that “it is through the perspective of these thumoeidic polarities” that Thrasymachus views the human condition. When considered alongside the thumotic imagery Plato uses to describe Thrasymachus, Plato’s depiction of Thrasymachus’s temper and argumentative persona, and Plato’s noting of how Thrasymachus interprets Socrates’s motives for having a dialogue in the first place, it appears as though Plato is saying that the “advantage of the stronger” argument comes not only from Thrasymachus, but from his inflated *thumos* and glory-seeking portion of his soul. It is in this way that the discussion between Socrates and Thrasymachus illustrates how glory-seeking – as an inherent part of the human condition – can manifest itself not only in an individual’s behavior, but also in how that individual views and consequently participates in their particular society or political sphere.

In Book IV of *The Republic*, a dialogue regarding the ideal city leads to the model of the tripartite soul – a soul composed of appetitive, spirited (*thumos*), and rational parts. That individual, intrinsic structure consequently begets a socio-political city divided into three corresponding classes – producers, guardians (*thumos*), and rulers, respectively. Beyond the explicit identification of *thumos* as a separate third of each individual’s soul, Plato, through the character of Socrates, investigates the soul in its social manifestation: the guardians of the ideal city. The most thumotic or glory-driven people are a natural choice for defense, as Plato illuminates through the depiction of fiery passion that Socrates describes as burning at the core of a glory-seeker:

⁶ Ibid, pg. 61.

But what happens if, instead, he believes that someone has been unjust to him? Isn't the spirit within him boiling and angry, fighting for what he believes to be just? Won't it endure hunger, cold, and the like and keep on till it is victorious, not ceasing from noble actions until it either wins, dies, or calms down, called to heel by the reason within him, like a dog by a shepherd? Spirit is certainly like that. (440c-d)

As Hanne Andrea Kraugerud explains, it is the “urge for honor and victory that makes *thumos* a necessary component in the virtue of courage, and explains why it is the part of the soul especially valuable and relevant for the guardians of the city.”⁷ The resemblance of *thumos* and glory-seeking is what compels scholars such as Simon Blackburn to describe the thumotic character of Achilles as “the ultimate action-man, the embodiment of touchy honor and military heroism.”⁸ Even Plato cannot resist a nod to the Homeric model for the ideal guardian of the ideal city, as Socrates mentions an “earlier quotation from Homer” in which Achilles “struck his chest and spoke to his heart” (441b). The invocation of heart – from which, etymologically, the *thumos*-soaked word *courage* (from the Latin *cor*, meaning ‘heart’) comes from and, like the glory-seeking portion of the soul, resides within each individual – and how the heart is an inseparable component of *thumos*, further supports the Platonic idea that glory-seeking matters because it is an inherent, inescapable, and innate part of one’s very being.

Kraugerud points to another classically Platonic image regarding the soul in her examination of what glory-seeking means for Plato – the famous charioteer in *Phaedrus*:

The horse that is on the right, or nobler, side is upright in frame and well jointed, with a high neck and a regal nose; his coat is white, his eyes are black, and he is a

⁷ Kraugerud, Hanne Andrea. “‘Essentially Social’? A Discussion of the Spirited Part of the Soul in Plato.” *European Journal of Philosophy* 18, no. 4 (2010): pg. 481–494. Pg. 484-485.

⁸ Blackburn, S. (2006), *Plato’s Republic*. London: Atlantic Books. Pg. 76

lover of honor with modesty and self-control; companion to true glory, he needs no whip, and is guided by verbal commands alone (*Phaedrus* 253d-e).⁹

Even in a separate portrait of the soul, Plato does not deny the innateness of glory-seeking. As Kraugerud observes, he also believes that “the spirited part can be more or less successfully bred and trained”,¹⁰ which implies that it is an inherent force that can be harnessed for good or let run wild for harm. Of course, the realm where this “good” or “harm” would manifest itself is the socio-political sphere in which individuals – who are dealing with and managing their respective inner “chariots” – reside and participate. It is in this regard that glory-seeking is something that matters. Both the tripartite soul model set forth in Book IV of *The Republic* and the charioteer model found in *Phaedrus* highlight glory-seeking for Plato as an inherent part of an individual’s being – something that matters because it is an inescapable and innate part of the human experience on both the individual and socio-political levels.

Finally, in Book IX of *The Republic*, Socrates, in an effort to argue for the superiority of the life of the philosopher, assesses both the money-lover and the honor-lover and how the intrinsic flame of *thumos* burning from within the soul fuels the actions of the honor-lover. Socrates reasons that “the spirited part” of the soul – the part which drives the honor-lover – is “wholly dedicated to the pursuit of control, victory, and high repute” (581a). For Socrates (and by proxy, Plato), these cravings are seen as less than ideal since the highest calling of the soul is that of the philosopher: the rational and truth-seeking. Later in Book IX, thumotic indulgences such as “flattery and slavishness” are

⁹ Kraugerud, Hanne Andrea. “‘Essentially Social’? A Discussion of the Spirited Part of the Soul in Plato.” *European Journal of Philosophy* 18, no. 4 (2010): pg. 481–494. Pg. 486.

¹⁰ Ibid, pg. 486.

condemned, primarily because “they subject the spirited part to the moblike beast, accustoming it from youth on to being insulted for the sake of the money needed to satisfy the beast’s appetites, so that it becomes an ape instead of a lion” (590b). It is this corruption of thumotic desire that characterizes the tyrant – the degenerate foil to the highly regarded philosopher-king and the socio-political (in this case, dystopian) consequence of an empowered individual’s glory-seeking appetite run wild.

Whereas the philosopher-king is ruled by balanced rationality, the tyrant is consumed by appetite, which in turn then twists his thumotic, glory-seeking desires into perverse servants for the unchecked appetitive soul. As scholar Pierre Destrée explains, “the tyrant is the one who because of neglecting the ‘muse’ and philosophy (probably both the right poetical and the philosophical educations) has become the slave of his appetites, being the representation of a person who lives his dreams for real.”¹¹ Plato sets forth this sentiment through the voice of Socrates as well, who says: “Now however, under the tyranny of erotic love [*eros*, the appetitive soul], he [the tyrant] has permanently become while awake what he used to become occasionally while asleep, and he won’t hold back from any terrible murder or from any kind of food or act” (574e). While the text of *The Republic* focuses on the appetitive as the primary corrupter of the soul, implicit in that is a corruption of the spirited portion, *thumos*. Pierre Destrée elaborates:

Now, in this very vivid depiction, especially in Book IX, Plato is both reminding his readers of his tri-partite theory of the soul and emphasizing that the tyrant’s soul is now totally ruled by his appetites. So this does mean that the philosopher’s

¹¹ Destrée, Pierre. "Poetry, Thumos, and Pity in the Republic." *Plato and the Poets*. Leiden: Brill, 2011. Pg. 267-281 Print.

thumoeides has now come totally under the control of the appetites, and does not at all obey his reason anymore. In other words, the philosopher's properly educated *thumoeides* has completely 'degenerated' into a *thumoeides* that has completely turned amok at the service of his appetites...Instead of being, like a lion, strongly willing to fight against his appetites, the *thumoeides* of the philosopher-turned-tyrant is now at the service of the appetites to help them make their way...In other words, his *thumoeides* has simply become almost undistinguishable from his appetites; these two irrational parts of his soul are now ruling over his entire soul, having destroyed (or at least put into silence) its rational part. It is no surprise then that in fact Plato does not explicitly mention *thumoeides* by name anymore in his description of the tyrant, as this part has now completely fused with the appetitive part.¹²

In this regard, glory-seeking exists for Plato as an inescapable inner force to be reckoned with for each individual as they pursue philosopher-king tendencies or tyrannical ones within the socio-political sphere. Glory-seeking ultimately matters because it can guide thoughts and actions, as it literally does in the case of the charioteer depiction found in Plato's *Phaedrus*. As Destrée observes, the place of glory-seeking in the soul is that of "an intermediate part which can make its alliance either with the appetitive part or with reason. But being intermediate, it can be pulled by both other parts at the very same time."¹³ Whether the white horse of *thumos* obeys the charioteer's reason (as it does in the image of the *Phaedrus*) or runs wild with the black horse of *eros*, it exists as within the soul nonetheless as an inescapable and innate part of the human experience.

In this way, it becomes clear that glory-seeking matters – at least in part – because it is an inherent part of the human condition with implications at both the individual and socio-political levels. Glory-seeking will therefore inform not only how an individual behaves, but how a society functions as well. In Book I, the exchange between Socrates

¹² Ibid

¹³ Ibid

and Thrasymachus reveals strikingly thumotic features of Thrasymachus, thus exemplifying how an inborn desire for glory can manifest itself in an individual's persona and worldview. In Book IV, through the model of the tripartite soul, Plato shows how an individual, intrinsic structure produces a political city that is divided into three corresponding classes depending on which part of the soul is favored by each individual citizen. Likewise, the charioteer model of the soul found in *Phaedrus* also provides insight into the internal struggle among between *logos*, *eros*, and *thumos*. Finally, in Book IX, glory-seeking holds significance for Plato as an inner force to be reckoned with for each individual, as they pursue glory either as truth-loving, philosopher-kings or overly appetitive and thumotic tyrants. Thus, ultimately for Plato, glory-seeking matters as a condition of what it means to be human – as both an individual in-and-of-onself, and also as a citizen within society at large.

CHAPTER FOUR

Glory-seeking as Socially Advantageous I: Thomas Hobbes

So that in the nature of man, we find three principall causes of quarrel. First, Competition; Secondly, Diffidence; Thirdly, Glory. The first, maketh men invade for Gain; the second, for Safety; and the third, for Reputation. The first use Violence, to make themselves Masters of other mens persons, wives, children, and cattell; the second, to defend them; the third, for trifles, as a word, a smile, a different opinion, and any other signe of undervalue, either direct in their Persons, or by reflexion in their Kindred, their Friends, their Nation, their Profession, or their Name – Thomas Hobbes, *The Leviathan* (Ch.XIII, Para. 6-7).

Glory-seeking wasn't just a concept that the ancient Greeks recognized and wrote about – Enlightenment thinkers also acknowledged this innate need within human beings for recognition, respect, glory, and honor as well. Notably, seventeenth century philosopher Thomas Hobbes – most famous for his work, *The Leviathan* – recognized that this inherent propensity for human beings to seek glory is something that humans not only realize within themselves, but manipulate and influence amongst others in the social sphere as well. For Hobbes, glory-seeking is a tool to be used throughout one's life and social existence – what he refers to as “the natural state of war,” a war that all of humanity is born into. Glory-seeking thus matters according to Hobbes as something that can be used to one's advantage when socially navigating the innate glory-seeking desires of oneself with regards to the same motivations within others. That is, glory-seeking is not merely a means towards glory alone, but rather a means towards satisfying the deeper and innate thumotic drive for advantage over others.

Beginning in Chapter X of *The Leviathan*, Hobbes philosophically develops working definitions of individual, glory-satiating and advantage-wielding rewards – those “Of Power, Worth, Dignity, Honour, and Worthinesse.” Soon after, in Chapter XIII, “Of the Natural Condition of Mankind, as Concerning their Felicity, and Misery,” glory-seeking is again highlighted as a tool to be used in the natural state of war and competition caused by human freedom, perhaps as a means towards advantages given by the advantageous, glory-satiating rewards outlined in Chapter X. The method of investigating why glory-seeking matters according to Hobbes will be twofold: First, an analysis of the socially advantageous fruits of glory-seeking presented in Chapter X and, then, a consequential examination of how and why those fruits can be obtained by seeking individual glory within an artificial society born out of the natural state of war offered in Chapter XIII. Ultimately, for Hobbes, glory-seeking matters because it is a tool to be used to one’s social advantage – as one navigates the innate glory-seeking desires of oneself with regards to the same glory-seeking motivations of others in the natural state of war, those who are able to master the art of glory-seeking within their respective social sphere will find themselves rewarded with glory-satiating and advantage-wielding Power, Worth, Dignity, Honor, and Worthiness.

In Chapter X of *The Leviathan*, entitled “Of Power, Worth, Dignity, Honour, and Worthinesse,” Hobbes develops philosophical working definitions for each glory-satiating and advantage-wielding prize mentioned in the chapter’s title that collectively begin to illuminate how glory-seeking matters as a tool for one’s social advantage. Each term is conceptually close in relation with each of the others, as well as with the concepts

of glory-seeking and advantage, and, accordingly, Hobbes uses Chapter X in order to investigate the various reasons one might seek glory via examination of these advantageous fruits of glory-seeking labor. Each aforementioned glory-satiating and advantage-wielding reward is defined by Hobbes in Chapter X of *The Leviathan* as follows:

Power - The Power of a Man, (to take it Universally), is his present means, to obtain some future apparent Good (*Leviathan*, Ch. X, Para. 1).

Worth – The Value, or Worth of a man, is as of all other things, his Price; that is to say, so much as would be given for the use of his Power: and therefore is not absolute; but a thing dependant on the need of judgement of another (Ch.X, Para. 15).

Dignity – The publique worth of a man, which is the Value set on him by the Common-wealth, is that which men commonly call Dignity. (Ch. X, Para. 17).

Honour – To pray to another, for ayde of any kind...to obey...to give great gifts to a man...to be sedulous in promoting anothers goods; also to flatter...to give way or place to another in any Commodity...to show any signe of love, or feare of another...to praise, magnifie, or call happy...to speak to another with consideration, to appear before him with decency, and humility...to believe, to trust, to rely on another...to hearken to a man's counsell, or discourse of what kind soever...to do those things to another, which he takes for signes of Honour, or which the Law or Custome makes so...to agree with in opinion...to imitate...to honour those another honours...to employ in counsell, or in actions of difficulty...is to Honour. (Ch. X, Para. 18-32).

Worthinesse – Worthinesse, is a thing different from the worth, or value of a man; and also from his merit or desert; and consisteth in a particular power, or ability for that, whereof he is said to be worth: which particular ability, is usually named Fitnessse, or Aptitude (Ch. X, Para. 52).

Each working definition of the glory-satiating and advantage-wielding rewards presented by Hobbes touch not only on the end-games of glory-seeking, but on the method as well: Power is presented as a “means to a future good”, with the ‘good’ being advantage over others as well as the glorified recognition of that advantage from others. Worth is defined as a measurement of that Power, or a way to relatively quantify one glory-seeking

individual's advantage (or disadvantage) with respect to other glory-seeking individuals within the same social sphere.

Dignity is the public value set on someone by their respective society, which is much like Worth but in a more conceptually normative sense. In whatever societal norms governing how individuals with advantage 'should' behave operate as a measuring stick for those glory-seekers who have successfully won advantage and, therefore, holds importance for these 'winners' in order for them to maintain their glorified status of advantageous recognition in the 'public' eye. Honor is a multi-faceted verb with a laundry-list of how to honor others via feeding their glory-seeking souls, essentially serving as the way in which thumotic advantage is transferred from one glory-seeker to another. Worthiness is respect or recognition due to one's advantage-wielding ability or Fitness regarding one's particular position of advantage. Through all of these definitions, Hobbes begins to lay the groundwork for the notion that glory-seeking is a tool that can be used for one's social advantage.

Hobbes's concept of Power is particularly interesting with regard to the idea of glory-seeking as an advantageous social tool to be used within the human experience.

Scholar John Dunn explains:

To see that power plays a very special role in Hobbes's conception of what human life is like, and register the sheer force of that conception within our own imaginations, consider what he says in his early work *The Elements of Law* about the Passions of the Mind... Amongst those passions, Hobbes mentions and analyses here glory or pride, humility, shame, courage, anger, revengefulness, repentance, hope, trust, pity, indignation, emulation, laughter (very strikingly), weeping, lust, love, charity, admiration, curiosity, magnanimity and pusillanimity. Most of these passions, on his account, turn on or consist in relations of power. Glory, for example, 'proceedeth from the imagination or conception of our own power, above the power of him that contesteth with us' (*The Elements of Law*, p.

50)....Power is an exhausting quarry to pursue because it can never be captured; but its relativity makes it also an unnerving preoccupation. Sometimes it accumulates under its own momentum, 'like Fame, increasing as it proceeds, or like the motion of heavy bodies, which the farther they go, make still the more hast' (*The Leviathan*, Chapter X, Para. 2). But it can also deflate, apparently under just the same momentum. Nothing succeeds like success; but nothing, too, can fail quite like failure. Hobbes's picture of what life is like is not a comforting one, and it leaves out a good deal. But there is something eerily persuasive about it.¹⁴

Power, in this way, for Hobbes, is both an end and a means of glory-seeking, as the pursuit of power and glory both aim to quench the various and insatiable thumotic passions rife throughout the human experience. Accordingly, Glory, for Hobbes, is not only a means to socially advantageous Power, but also an end of Power itself. Hobbesian notions of Power and Glory are thus entangled in a cycle in which the first begets the second which begets the first – with every powerful and glorious result satiating a deeper and innate thumotic drive for advantage over others. Yet, this much-sought after advantage over others is not easily won or easily held. Power itself is fleeting and fickle because it necessarily depends on the relative power of others – in a room full of kings, who would be chosen ruler? Or, rather, in the Hobbesian framework, the 'public' holds a form of advantage over those who seek it, because they are the ones who ultimately determine who is rewarded with "Power, Worth, Dignity, Honour, and Worthinesse." In this regard, Hobbes's concept of Power, as presented in Chapter X of *The Leviathan* serves as a compelling argument that glory-seeking is in fact a tool for individuals to use to their social advantage, with the social instability of that Power towards Glory (or Glory

¹⁴ Dunn, John. "The Significance of Hobbes's Conception of Power." *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* (2010), 13:2-3, 417-433. Pg. 421, Pg. 424.

towards Power) serving as a natural and essential ingredient to Hobbes's most famous idea: that man is born into a natural state of war against all men.

In Chapter XIII of *The Leviathan*, "Of the Natural Condition of Mankind, as Concerning their Felicity, and Misery," Hobbes's philosophical model of the natural state of war further clarifies the Hobbesian view of glory-seeking as a tool to be used to one's social advantage, especially when considered with the groundwork concepts from Chapter X in mind. Chapter XIII begins by positing that "Nature hath made men so equall" that "the weakest has strength enough to kill the strongest, either by secret machination, or by confederacy with others" (Chapter XIII, Para. 1). Hobbes continues to reason that "from this equality of ability, ariseth equality of hope in attaining of our Ends" and if "any two men desire the same thing, which neverthelesse they cannot both enjoy, they become enemies" (Chapter XIII, Para. 3). Continuing the argument, "from this diffidence of one another, there is no way for any man to secure himself" and, because all men have the ability to kill each other, they thus "have no pleasure (but on the contrary a great deale of grieve) in keeping company, where there is no power able to over-awe them all" (Chapter XIII, Para. 4-5). This logic – that from equality comes diffidence and from diffidence, violence – is the argument behind Hobbes's need for a 'Leviathan' and social contract through which a strong government can keep its citizens pugnacious tendencies in check. As Hobbes explains, "during the time men live without a common Power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called Warre; and such a warre, as is of every man, against every man" (Chapter XIII, Para. 8). Thus is

the Hobbesian “natural state of war”, born from the natural freedom and equality of humanity.

The natural propensity to seek glory and advantage also figures into the “natural state of war” via the Hobbesian concept of Power with regard to the “principal causes of quarrel.” The concept of Power and its thumotic associates (Glory, Worth, Dignity, Honour, and Worthiness) outlined in Chapter X bear much weight towards the idea of glory-seeking as socially advantageous tool when contextualized with the “principal causes of quarrel” as explained by Hobbes in Chapter XIII:

So that in the nature of man, we find three principall causes of quarrel. First, Competition; Secondly, Diffidence; Thirdly, Glory. The first, maketh men invade for Gain; the second, for Safety; and the third, for Reputation. The first use Violence, to make themselves Masters of other mens persons, wives, children, and cattell; the second, to defend them; the third, for trifles, as a word, a smile, a different opinion, and any other signe of undervalue, either direct in their Persons, or by reflexion in their Kindred, their Friends, their Nation, their Profession, or their Name (Ch.XIII, Para. 6-7).

According to Hobbes, people quarrel due to competition (a concept with both appetitive and thumotic motivations), diffidence (appetitive and rational protective measures), and, most fascinatingly, for glory (which is purely thumotic). Petty things like “trifles, a word, a smile, a different opinion” are somehow grounds for one to quarrel (and perhaps kill) another. As scholar Arash Abizadeh explains:

Hobbesian war primarily arises not because material resources are scarce; or because humans ruthlessly seek survival before all else; or because we are naturally selfish, competitive, or aggressive brutes. Rather, it arises because we are fragile, fearful, impressionable, and psychologically prickly creatures susceptible to ideological manipulation, whose anger can become irrationally inflamed by even trivial slights to our glory.¹⁵

¹⁵ Abizadeh, Arash. “Hobbes on the Causes of War: A Disagreement Theory.” *American Political Science Review* (2011), Vol. 105, No.2, Pg. 298-315. Pg. 298.

Hobbes, like Plato before him, recognized that human beings are innately glory-seeking creatures. However, for Hobbes, human beings are also naturally quarrelsome creatures who are in a constant state of war with one another. As humans individually seek Glory and Power – two concepts that necessarily depend on the valuation of other glory-seeking individuals – they are bound to conflict over anything that might offend their glory-seeking souls. In other words, Hobbes recognizes that human beings are innately disposed to react to perceived insults, and, because Hobbesian Glory is produced by recognition of one's Power (and vice-versa), the innate inclinations for human beings to seek glory and power also causes them to naturally be at war with each other. Abizadeh elaborates on this concept:

Disagreement leads to war *because* humans are inclined to view its expression as a sign of contempt: To be contradicted by others, especially by a supposed equal—and sometimes especially if the disagreement concerns a mere “egg-shell,” as Hamlet put it—is to suffer a blow to the glory and honor that humans typically desire. Thus, the problem in the state of nature is not simply that without an enforced common procedure for settling disputes about right action, conflicts stemming from other sources—competition or fear of death, for example—cannot be resolved. The problem is, rather, that the mere expression of disagreement is itself frequently the catalyst for war. Nor is violent conflict necessarily fueled by the aggressive desire to dominate others: Hobbes's glory argument focuses instead on the more reactive disposition triggered by perceived insults in social interactions.¹⁶

Abizadeh gets at the concept that our glory-seeking souls are not quite rational, and in many cases can be far from reason, causing seemingly avoidable aggression to take place. Plato, of course, observed this as well – the charioteer image in the *Phaedrus* with the rational *logos* being tasked with reigning in the irrational *thumos* and *eros* comes to mind.

¹⁶ Ibid, pg. 299.

However, within Hobbes's framework of Power, Worth, Dignity, Honor, and Worthiness and their grave importance to human beings, a mere Platonic observation of glory-seeking as an irrational part of the human condition ignores the opportunity glory provides for those looking to gain from a world in which they are forced to socially coexist with others, virtually all of whom that have similar thumotic drive. That is, those who can successfully seek and obtain glory will naturally find themselves within reach of the thumotic and advantageous prizes of Power, Worth, Dignity, Honor, and Worthiness – the most important within a natural state of war being that of Power. In this way, glory-seeking truly shapes the human experience within the social sphere, where individual glory-seekers interact with individual glory-seekers in a natural state of war-like competition for advantage over one another. Glory-seeking therefore matters in a Hobbesian way because it is a tool that can be used for individual advantage in the natural state of war.

Ultimately, for Hobbes, glory-seeking matters because it is a tool to be used to one's social advantage – as one navigates the innate glory-seeking desires of oneself with regards to the same glory-seeking motivations of others in the natural state of war, those who are able to master the art of glory-seeking within their respective social sphere will find themselves rewarded with glory-satiating and advantage-wielding Power, Worth, Dignity, Honor, and Worthiness. As Plato's *Phaedrus* organizes the innate model of the human soul as *logos* taming *eros* and *thumos* on an individually valuable level, Hobbes's three principal causes of quarrel can be organized on a socially useful level with *Glory*

shaping the ideological basis of both *Competition* and *Diffidence*.¹⁷ For Hobbes, glory-seeking is not merely a means towards Glory alone, but rather a means towards the deeper and innate thumotic drive for advantage over others. In this way, through expansion on Plato's view of glory-seeking as an inherent part of the human condition, glory-seeking matters according to Hobbes as an innate force that can be used to one's advantage when socially navigating the innate glory-seeking desires of oneself with regards to the same glory-seeking desires residing within others.

¹⁷ Ibid, pg. 300.

CHAPTER FIVE

Glory-seeking as an Answer to Existential Angst I: Jean-Paul Sartre

Shame reveals to me that I *am* this being, not in the mode of “was” or of “having to be” but *in-itself*.

– Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* (Pt.3, Ch.1, Sec. IV: The Look)

The human desire to seek glory can be seen as ultimately tied to how human beings cope with the anxiety of existential awareness – the awareness of their very existence in the world. Jean-Paul Sartre, in his philosophical treatise, *Being and Nothingness* and his existential novel, *Nausea*, illustrates the angst that comes from the dual awareness of the contingency of existence and the inevitability of freedom. Glory-seeking, in this framework, provides an answer to existential angst – it is a cure to the Nausea created by existential awareness, awareness of contingency and freedom. Glory-seeking thus matters in an existential way because it helps humans believe that they themselves matter via the recognition of the Others who are all around them. Thus, glory-seeking, in a Sartrean sense, can be understood as an effort to remedy the Nausea caused by the awareness of one’s own simultaneously contingent and free existence – a method through which human beings flee shame and pursue its coveted inverse, pride, in what Sartre calls either “good” or “bad” faith.

In understanding how Sartre would view glory-seeking, it is important to first examine his concepts of “bad faith” and “play-acting,” “the look” of “the Other,” and the Nausea of existential awareness itself, all within the context of his concepts of shame and its opposite, pride, the end of glory-seeking. Through an examination of *Being and Nothingness* and *Nausea*, glory-seeking will be shown to be a possible means through

which human beings can help themselves believe that they existentially and ultimately matter in an authentic (“good faith”) or inauthentic (“bad faith”) way, all in an attempt to cure the Nausea brought on by existential awareness.

Towards the beginning of *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre outlines the concept of bad faith – a state of inauthentic living in which human beings negate what they are and “from themselves hide the truth” about their being (*Being and Nothingness*, Pt.1, Ch.2, Sec. I: Bad Faith and Falsehood). “The truth” that humans hide from via bad faith is their simultaneous existence as both a subject (“being-for-itself”) and an object (“being-in-itself”) – a contingent existence that causes nauseous anxiety for those who become aware of and consequently dwell on it. This is existential awareness, the ontological root of existential angst and what Sartre refers to as Nausea. Understanding the significance of the freely taken act of negation of one’s existential awareness is perhaps the first critical step to understanding Sartrean shame and thus a Sartrean concept of glory-seeking. It is only through the free act of negation that a human being can pretend that he or she is either only a subject or only an object, taking solace in a prescribed identity-role rather than having anxiously to face the reality of free choice and vacillation between being both a “being-for-itself” (subject) when acting on others and a “being-in-itself” (object) when being acted upon by others. In other words, it is through inevitable freedom that one can deny and negate one’s own contingency in an effort to escape the Nausea that it causes. This self-deceptive avoidance of existential awareness and the resulting Nausea - which, for Sartre, is the unavoidable natural state of being that all human beings are thrown into at birth - is bad faith.

It is important to note that bad faith, rather than an ignorant lie or general unawareness, is a conscious act of self-deception. As Sartre explains, “that which affects itself with bad faith must be conscious of its bad faith since the being of consciousness is consciousness of being” (Pt.1, Ch.2, Sec. I). For Sartre, bad faith is an internal and advantageous (at least in a short-term sense) inauthentic, self-deceptive effort to deal with shame, which stems from the anxiety of existential awareness in a world full of Others who remind one of one’s contingency. That is, shame of one’s true form as both a being-in-itself and a being-for-itself (subject and object) is not only an impetus for bad faith, but also a continuous result of bad faith, since one who acts in bad faith is on some level aware that they are living a lie in an effort to combat shame and the Nausea caused by existential awareness. Conversely, good faith, which is also internal and advantageous (perhaps in a long-term way), can be understood as an honest recognition of the human propensity for bad faith and an acceptance, rather than negation, of the discomfort of existential awareness. That is, good faith is a conscious effort, through authentic and self-honest living, not to fall into bad faith – this is an effort and mode of living that will no doubt yield a sense of pride, rather than shame. Glory-seeking can thus be understood as an authentic means towards pride (which I will refer to as true-pride, since it is achieved through authentic means) or an inauthentic means away from shame (or towards what I will refer to as false-pride, since it is reached in an inauthentic manner).

Bad faith manifests itself in social situations by way of a process that Sartre calls “play-acting” – the role-playing efforts of humans which “all aim at establishing that they are not what they are” (Pt.1, Ch.2, Sec. II: Patterns of Bad Faith). The roles that are

played are advantageous in a Hobbesian sense, as they may in some cases provide social advantage, but in a Sartrean sense they are advantageous as a means to escape from the reality and anxiety (Nausea) of one's true being as simultaneous subject and object. Sartre provides three chief examples of play-acting in *Being and Nothingness*: a seduction scene at a restaurant where a woman pushes off her decision to consent to or resist the lingering hand of her date; a waiter who takes on the role of the waiter as his definitive personal identity; and a homosexual who incessantly denies his sexuality in an over-compensatory manner (Pt.1, Ch.2, Sec. II). These three examples serve as manifestations of bad faith in the following respective ways: in the case of the woman, there is a prolonging of the decision to accept the inevitable reality of choice itself and, as a result, her bad faith effort to escape anxiety and freedom through lingering hesitation. In the case of the waiter, there is an over-affirmation of his occupation as an escape from anxiety and freedom. In the case of the denying homosexual, there is the over-negation of his true identity and actual being as an escape from anxiety and freedom. All three examples are in bad faith because, in each case, the actor is trying to become something he or she is not in an effort to flee from existential anxiety and Nausea stemming from the innate freedom of choice. Moreover, each actor in some way fails to freely exert his or her freedom in good faith by choosing not to choose and, in doing so, essentially lies to himself or herself: the first example of the woman is the choice not to choose through procrastinated indecision, the second example of the waiter is the choice not to choose through the affirmation of a pre-determined role which will thus make all of his decisions

for him, and the third example of the denying homosexual is the choice not to choose through a pre-determined identity negation that dictates his behavior at every turn.

It is in this regard that play-acting is a bad faith manifestation of choosing not to choose, which, of course, is still a choice itself. Play-acting is a short-term advantageous effort to flee the hard truth of one's own existence as both a subject and an object, and one's inherent and inescapable freedom in the world. As Sartre puts it, in the process of play-acting, "I flee from myself, I escape myself, leaving my tattered garments in the hand of the fault-finder" (Pt.1, Ch.2, Sec. II). The phrase "fault-finder" is a key to beginning to understand Sartre's notions of shame and pride, and, consequently, glory-seeking - for it is others and only Others (as subjects) who can dictate fault, opinion, recognition, respect, glory, honor, pride, or shame for each individual (as an object). Thus, in relation to the overall glory-seeking context set forth by Plato and investigated further by Hobbes, Sartre's addition to this developing concept of glory-seeking is the observation of bad-faith glory-seeking as a human's effort to flee inherent shame (which is the inverse of pride and glory, as observed by Plato and by Sartre), moving instead towards inauthentic false-pride through the short-term, existentially advantageous (and perhaps socially advantageous in the Hobbesian sense) process of play-acting. Conversely, good-faith glory-seeking occurs when a human seeks true-pride through the existentially advantageous (and, again, possibly socially Hobbesian advantageous) process of authentically being what one actually is - as Sartre explains, "If man is what he is, bad faith is forever impossible and candor ceases to be his ideal and becomes instead his being" (Pt.1, Ch.2, Sec. II). In the Sartrean context of bad faith, good faith and

play-acting, glory-seeking emerges as a way in which human beings can feel as though they existentially matter in a world filled with other human beings.

But what causes shame in the first place? To answer this question one must consider Sartre's concept of "the look of the Other." Shame, for Sartre, is "shame of oneself before the Other," yet at the same time, one "needs the Other in order to realize fully all the structures of [one's] being," highlighting once again the Nausea that can come from the existential awareness of contingency and freedom (Pt.3, Ch.1, Sec. I: The Problem). Much like Hobbesian glory via power or power via glory, shame for Sartre is a concept that completely depends on the opinions and recognition of other human beings through the dual, simultaneous subject-object relationships of human existence. Likewise, these aforementioned "structures of being" include the previously discussed reasons for glory-seeking, such as the inherent thumotic desire for glory (Plato), and the inherent use of glory-seeking towards advantageous power (Hobbes). These structures additionally include the bad faith or good faith movement towards pride and away from shame within a world filled with "Others" who are always "looking." These Others do indeed satiate the innate Platonic desire for glory and the Hobbesian desire for advantage via glory, but most importantly, in an ultimate and existential sense, they satisfy the Sartrean desire to existentially matter, and to matter by means of recognition reflected back inward onto the self via "the look" - which can consequently carry an interpretation of pride or shame for the one who is being looked-at. As Sartre explains, "I recognize that I am as the Other sees me" (Pt.3, Ch.1, Sec. I).

It is through the look of the Other that one experiences pride or shame of one's contingent ontological individual being, and, in a larger context, attains glory and value for their existential social being, since glory-seeking is also in part (according to Plato) an inherent structure of being – judged as a lone object by the numerous subjects whose recognition is sought. Lisa Guenther explains this relationship between the look of the Other and internally inherent structure towards shame:

For Sartre, shame attests to a dimension of my own existence that does not originate in self-consciousness, but in my exposure to Others. I call this an ontological account of shame because it speaks to the structure...The gaze [look] of the Other does not offer me anything in particular to know; rather, it alters my being, triangulating the structure of my existence into a relation between me, myself and the Other.¹⁸

This triangulation via “the look” of me, myself, and the Other can be understood in terms of good faith and bad faith as follows: when “me” (true-self) equals “myself” (self-presented identity) regardless of the Other, then one is living authentically in good faith, whereas when “myself” equals the projected expectations of the Other regardless of “me,” then one is living inauthentically in bad faith. Connecting back to the three examples of play-acting, which is a means through which human beings can exercise bad faith and escape the dual subject-object nature of themselves, sheds further light on Sartre's analysis: the indecisive woman bases her “myself” (identity) on the projected expectations of her potential lover and chooses not to make a choice by pretending his hand is not actually resting on hers in a suggestive way. The obsessed waiter entirely throws his “myself” into what he believes the ideal role of a waiter is according to Others

¹⁸ Guenther, L. “Shame and the Temporality of Social Life.” *Continental Philosophy Review*, 44(1). (2011). Pg. 23-39. Pg. 24,25.

and makes his identity and his occupation one and the same. The denying homosexual wholly negates his “me” (true-self) in an effort to construct a “myself” that he believes will be appealing to Others and thus goes to great lengths to falsely be perceived as heterosexual. In this regard, what truly determines good faith or bad faith in a glory-seeking sense is how one chooses to respond to the look of the Other, or, more broadly, how one chooses to use one’s inevitable freedom to respond to one’s nauseating contingency. Therefore, the choices that human beings make in their glory-seeking will either yield pride in a true-pride sense (good faith) or avoid shame in a false-pride sense (bad faith). In either case, existential glory-seeking is a choice made by human beings in an attempt to prove to themselves and all Others that they do indeed matter.

At this point it is important to reexamine existential awareness and, more explicitly, the Nausea it causes. After all, Nausea is the ontological reason why human beings go to all of the trouble of play-acting in the first place. There is no better text that illustrates the inescapable, overwhelming, and discomforting force of existential awareness than Sartre’s *Nausea*. *Nausea* is the diary of Antoine Roquentin, a writer who one day begins to contemplate his existence and freedom in the world and, as a result, begins to feel an illness that he describes as “the filth, the Nausea.”¹⁹ This “Nausea,” or unsettling feeling of anxiety caused by way of existential awareness of both contingency and freedom, is unavoidable for Roquentin and it seeps into all of his social interactions with others, as well as his internal interactions with himself throughout the pages of his diary entries. Nausea can thus be understood as the result of existential awareness, not

¹⁹ Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Nausea*. Trans. Lloyd Alexander. New York: New Direction, 2007. Print. Pg. 18.

only in relation the contingent and anxious feeling caused by the look of the Other but also as an awareness of the look into one's own self by way of reflection on the ontological state of one's existence. Using inevitable freedom to navigate this phenomenon of Nausea caused by contingency can take both beneficial and detrimental forms: authentic good faith and inauthentic bad faith.

The famous scene of Roquentin and the chestnut tree helps illustrate the larger contexts of glory-seeking and the Nausea of existential awareness. One day, Antoine finds himself sitting alone in a park, completely consumed by the prospect of existence in the world:

The roots of the chestnut tree were sunk in the ground just under my bench. I couldn't remember it was a root any more. The words had vanished and with them the significance of things, their methods of use, and the feeble points of reference which men have traced on their surface...then I had this vision. It left me breathless. Never, until these last few days, had I understood the meaning of 'existence'...And then all of a sudden, there it was, clear as day: existence had suddenly unveiled itself. It had lost the harmless look of an abstract category: it was the very past of things, this root was kneaded into existence...This moment was extraordinary. I was there, motionless and icy, plunged in a horrible ecstasy...I understood the Nausea, I possessed it...I *was* the root of the chestnut tree. Or rather I was entirely conscious of its existence. Still detached from it - since I was conscious of it - yet lost in it, nothing but it.²⁰

This scene effectively captures both the positive and negative aspects - "the horrible ecstasy" - of existential awareness, and thus the Nausea that stems from the vast freedom and disorienting contingency of human existence. This ontological Nausea ultimately births the Sartrean phenomena of good faith (positive), bad faith (negative), shame, and pride. Consequently, glory-seeking for Sartre cannot be fully understood without also understanding the magnitude of existential angst or Nausea for the human being. In fact,

²⁰ Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Nausea*. Trans. Lloyd Alexander. New York: New Direction, 2007. Print. Pg. 126-131.

glory-seeking in an existential sense is in many ways a measured response - in either good faith or bad faith - to the Nausea of existential awareness.

A good faith response to the Nausea of existential awareness would be to recognize it as an inherent and inescapable sickness or feeling, come to terms with that absurd reality of freedom and contingency, and thus advantageously pursue true-pride via authentic living. As Antoine realizes, “there is no half-way house between non-existence and this flaunting abundance. If you existed, you had to exist all the way, as far as mouldiness, bloatedness, obscenity were concerned.”²¹ In other words, existence is a total-package deal that, in good faith, must be accepted blemishes-and-all, as any denial or negation of those blemishes would be in bad faith. Accordingly, a bad faith response to the Nausea of existential awareness would be a negation or denial of it itself, resulting in attempts to flee the consequential shame (or pursue a false-pride) via inauthentic living. Bad faith is a failure to understand that “the world of explanations and reasons is not the world of existence” and living as if they are, in denial of the grossly uncomfortable Nausea in realizing things actually “exist in such a way that you cannot explain them.”²² Like the indecisive woman, the unctuous waiter, and the denying homosexual, one can distract oneself from facing one’s own absurd existence and freedom in the world with diversions, such as interpretations of Others, and do so in bad faith. The Nausea that comes from realizing one’s dual, contingent existence as a being-for-itself and a being-in-itself is the root cause of this good faith or bad faith choice and, more specifically, the cause of good faith or bad faith glory-seeking: the one facing existential reality and

²¹ Ibid, Pg. 128.

²² Ibid, Pg. 129.

pursuing existentially-gratifying pride (true-pride), the other distracting himself or herself, avoiding (albeit temporarily) existentially-painful shame (false-pride).

The look of the Other is also at play in the chestnut tree scene, and it effectively connects this notion of ontological Nausea back to both good faith and bad faith concepts of glory-seeking. The look of the Other is what immediately highlights one's contingency and thus fuels the sticky, viscous, and gooey Nausea of existential self-awareness. This, in turn, contributes to shame via an internalization of the look of the Other. As Antoine stares and stares at the root of the chestnut tree, he realizes that humans and the world at large are "a heap of living creatures, irritated, embarrassed at ourselves, we hadn't the slightest reason to be there, none of us, each one, confused, vaguely alarmed, feeling *in the way* in relation to the others."²³ It is this *in the way* feeling that serves as a literary and emotional expression of shame about the contingency that one is reminded of by the look of the Other – Antoine realizes that he "too was *in the way*."²⁴ It is the look of the Other which reminds human beings that they are *in the way*, or causes them to feel shame vis-à-vis the Nausea of existential awareness. Antoine is "uncomfortable because he was afraid of feeling" the Nausea, but even then fails to see that he is experiencing the Nausea already through this feeling of being uncomfortable in fear and shame.²⁵ This, again, would be an example of bad faith with regard to the Nausea. Thus, bad faith glory-seeking can be understood as an effort to flee shame at the look of the Other. Conversely, good faith glory-seeking is a means towards pride (true-pride) via authenticity. That is,

²³ Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Nausea*. Trans. Lloyd Alexander. New York: New Direction, 2007. Print. Pg. 128.

²⁴ Ibid, Pg. 128.

²⁵ Ibid, Pg. 128.

pride is gleaned from recognizing the Nausea prompted by the look of the Other for what it is: the recognition that “no necessary being can explain existence,” that “all is free,” and that “contingency [with respect to Others] is not a delusion.”²⁶ In other words, good faith glory-seeking is glory-seeking that accepts existence and its dual, contingent reality as a being both for-itself and in-itself, while bad faith glory-seeking is a glory-seeking that denies or negates the nature of existence. In either case, the actor uses freedom to seek glory as a way in which he or she can existentially matter: either inauthentically, if one is being what he or she is “for the Other” only in a sole attempt to gain the Other’s recognition, or authentically, if one is simply being what he or she actually is and, as a natural consequence, takes true-pride in doing so.

Ultimately, glory-seeking is a response to the Nausea of existential awareness. It is way through which human beings can existentially and ultimately matter in either an authentic (good faith) or inauthentic (bad faith) way. Through examination of the concepts bad faith, play-acting, the look of the Other, and existential Nausea as presented in *Being and Nothingness* and *Nausea*, working in conjunction with the notions of glory-seeking as already presented by Plato and Hobbes, glory-seeking can be understood in an existential sense as a way to matter in a world of Others: in good faith towards true-pride or in bad faith away from shame (towards false-pride). As Sartre observes, “shame – like pride – is the apprehension of myself as a nature although that very nature escapes me and is unknowable as such. Strictly speaking, it is not that I perceive myself losing my freedom in order to become a thing, but my nature is – over there, outside my lived

²⁶ Ibid, Pg. 131.

freedom – as a given attribute of this being which I am for the Other (Pt.3, Ch.1, Sec. IV: The Look). Accordingly, in glory-seeking “for the Other,” one experiences the shame of living inauthentically in bad faith as a contingent object or being-in-itself for another. Yet one can take this very “apprehension of self” and transform it into a positive source of pride by glory-seeking authentically, in good faith awareness of the conditions that cause Nausea. That is, if one is seeking recognition not for its own sake (which would be inauthentic), but recognition for being what one authentically is, then one is glory-seeking in good faith. In this way, glory-seeking is existentially advantageous because it allows one to exercise freedom and live either authentically and reap true-pride or inauthentically avoiding shame (reaping false-pride) – the relative long-term and lasting advantages, of course, lie with the choice of authenticity. Glory-seeking also deals with an inherent and inescapable problem of human existence: our ability to exist as we choose. Glory-seeking additionally lets the human being cope with shame and pursue pride, either in bad faith or good faith, ultimately allowing the individual to matter, either authentically or inauthentically. Therefore, ultimately, for Sartre, building off of the contextualized ideas of Plato and Hobbes, glory-seeking is inherent, advantageous, and, most importantly, a means towards existential meaning and value.

CHAPTER SIX

Glory-seeking as an Inherent Part of the Human Condition II: NFL Injuries

Be a player, not a patient – Jason Taylor, former NFL Defensive End

Plato's *Republic* and *Phaedrus* aren't the only ancient works to observe and comment on glory-seeking as an inherent part of the human experience. Homer's *Iliad* also has something to offer with regard to the innate propensity for humans to seek glory. Looking around modern societies and the individuals who inhabit them today, one can find numerous manifestations of glory-seeking and, upon closer examination, evidence of its prevalence as well. This may or may not come as a surprise – after all, there is nothing new under the sun, especially supposedly innate and inescapable parts of the human condition.

While many current examples can be found and analyzed regarding glory-seeking, the one that primarily comes to mind for me is the case of professional athletes risking their health and earning potential to play injured. What – if anything – would Plato and Homer have to say about this phenomenon?

While I'm not quite sure exactly how or in what way an ancient thinker would answer, however, given the texts they've left behind, I would imagine that the idea of an inherent, inescapable, and innate tendency for a human being to seek glory is at the center of whatever that answer ultimately would be. In this way, through applying the thoughts on glory-seeking presented in *The Republic*, *Phaedrus*, and *The Iliad* to glory-seeking

phenomena in the modern world today, the notion of glory-seeking as an inherent part of the human condition becomes less of an abstract theory and more of a concrete reality.

Cultural Crossover: *The Iliad* and The NFL

I've loved professional sports ever since I can remember. This is not unusual for modern day American boys. Growing up in the Philadelphia area, I have been rooting for the local teams - the Phillies, Eagles, Sixers, and Flyers – my entire life. Often times, on the playground or in the backyard as a young boy, I would pretend to be Sixers' point-guard Allen Iverson or Eagles' quarterback Donovan McNabb during pick-up (and soon enough organized) games of basketball and football. These were my idols, my role models for what it meant to be an athlete. If it was a good reputation – or popularity, or respect, or honor, or glory – that I sought from my fellow young peers, how these players played was the model.

My schoolyard friends and I are much older now, but the tales we reminisce about as young sports fans have remained for the most part the same: The way Allen Iverson, no matter how tired he was from being knocked down all game, would relentlessly attack the basket for forty-eight minutes night-in and night-out, seemingly willing the Sixers to victory through his brazen and admirable resolve. Or how Donovan McNabb, despite constant criticism from the Philadelphia media, would carry an undermanned Eagles offense and secure wins and division titles season-after-season – once, even throwing for four touchdowns while playing with a broken ankle!²⁷ That broken-ankle game always sticks out to me, partially because it defies basic logic: Why in the hell would a

²⁷ ESPN, NFL. "Injured McNabb Leads Eagles in Rout." *ESPN.com*. STATS LLC and The Associated Press, 17 Nov. 2002. Web. < <http://scores.espn.go.com/nfl/recap?gameId=221117021>>.

professional athlete – someone whose entire livelihood depends directly on their body's ability to perform within a short window of their life – ever risk playing injured? Of course, as a former football player myself (from third-grade through the end of high-school), I've been told the answer since day one: sacrifice yourself for the good of the team! Be a warrior! But what does that even mean? What exactly is a warrior in the context of football and why does it matter – to me personally as well as to my team, and sometimes even more than my own health – that I be one?

Achilles, of Homer's *Iliad* and Greek lore, was the ideal warrior. In fact, he was so great that even the gods line up to watch his fights unfold, mirroring the way sports fans may support a favorite athlete today (*Iliad*, 20.29-30). *The Iliad* offers many examples of glory-seeking and often implies that glory-seeking is in fact an innate part of the human condition that each human being is forced to reckon with. Particularly, the characters of Achilles, Aeneas, and Hector all provide instances of inherent glory-seeking manifesting itself into one's actions and decision-making. Ultimately, all three Homeric warriors find themselves risking their very lives to satiate their glory-seeking souls.

In Book 18 of *The Iliad*, Achilles – after much war-waging between the Greeks and the Trojans – ultimately decides to seek glory at the expense of a longer, safer life on earth. After originally dropping out of the war and later questioning if the life of a soldier is a life worth living, Achilles rejoins the fight with a vengeance after Patroclus is killed by Hector (18.107-109). While the original decision for Achilles not to fight appeals mostly to the appetitive and rational parts of the soul (the parts that would champion self-preservation and non-violent ideals), Achilles actually withdraws from the war due to his

wounded *thumos* via public humiliation at the hands of an embarrassed and angry Agamemnon. King of kings, Agamemnon essentially takes the proud Achilles's prized maiden, Briseis, from him in order to make up for the fact that Agamemnon's maiden, Chryseis, needed to be returned to her father to lift a curse cast on the Achaeans by Apollo at his request (1.1-611). Pride, a concept closely connected with glory-seeking, is the greatest reason Achilles withdraws from the war.

Achilles later contemplates the "two clear courses to death's end": the one of the valiant soldier, a short life which leads to "fame that is forever," or one of returning home and "giving up such great renown" in exchange for "a life that is a long one" but certainly less memorable (9.410-416). Homer seems to imply that there is always an inherent price to glory-seeking and that there is good reason to sometimes consider that price too steep. However, the glory-seeking part of the soul is too important for Achilles, and, upon the death of his dear friend Patroclus, he chooses to fight once again, even while acknowledging that he is now destined for a short and glorious life, rather than a long and safe one (18.107-114). The pursuit of glory and honor – similar, if not congruent concepts – for Achilles is what drives his actions time and time again in *The Iliad*. Thus, through Achilles's thumotic decisions, Homer identifies how glory-seeking is an inherently important factor for human beings – one that to some may even be worth a decidedly shorter life.

In Book 20 of *The Iliad*, Aeneas almost dies due to his decision to fight Achilles, primarily based on glory-seeking. After Apollo encourages him to fight Achilles (20.123-130), Aeneas is further praised by Hera who exclaims that he is "loved by the greatest

gods on high” (20.144). This confidence boost by the deities pumps up Aeneas to the point that he recklessly challenges Achilles in battle, something he was even originally against doing when he wasn’t consumed by the appeal of seeking glory – as Aeneas had stated earlier, with a more level head, “It’s much against [his] will – [Achilles’] fury is overwhelming” (20.104). Aeneas ends up getting beaten so badly that Poseidon has to intervene to save him from imminent death (I20.371-376). Poseidon even chastises Aeneas for his lack of judgment and glory-seeking blindness: “Aeneas - what god on high commands you to play the madman? Fighting against Achilles’ overwhelming fury!” (20.378-380). By allowing the glory-seeking to inflate his confidence and overpower his rationality, Aeneas is almost destroyed on the battlefield. Consequently, his unchecked glory-seeking does a disservice not only to his well-being as individual (by virtue of almost dying), but his country as well. Again, Homer seems to be saying that glory-seeking is an inherent question to be dealt with for human beings – one that matters enough to drive one to recklessly risk one’s life.

Early on in *The Iliad*, Hector supposedly chooses to fight in order to protect his family, as evidenced by an intimate moment with his son and wife before he kisses them goodbye and goes off to war (6.575-589). However, just before he does so he explains that he seeks glory as well, wishing “to stand up bravely, always to fight in the front ranks of Trojan soldiers, winning my father great glory, glory for myself” (6.527-529). As the war wages on, King Priam eventually begs his son Hector to save himself rather than seek glory. However, Hector would rather save face than save his life, telling himself:

If I slip inside the gates and walls, Polydamas will be first to heap disgrace on me...Now my army's ruined, thanks to my own reckless pride, I would die of shame to face the men of Troy...So, now, better by far for me to stand up to Achilles, kill him, come home alive or die at his hands in glory out before the walls (22.118-131).

Eventually, when Hector does make his final charge, he even cries "Well let me die – but not without struggle, not without glory, no, in some great clash of arms that even men to come will hear of down the years!" (22.359-362). The effects of glory-seeking for Hector are two-fold: First, by allowing the assumed opinions of the people of Troy to affect his decision making, Hector literally destroys himself in an attempt to seek glory and avoid the shame of failure. Second, glory-seeking is also an inherent force for Hector, as assumptions he has about Trojan society and the societal value of glory-seeking could be rationally ignored in the face of his own mortality. In this regard, Homer implies that there is societal significance in how humans individually answer the inherent question of glory-seeking. As the tragedy of Hector – who is both a contributor and recipient of glory-seeking concepts within Trojan society – shows, individual lives and social wars can ultimately be at stake over the fundamental question of glory-seeking.

In a sense, Homer uses the characters in *The Iliad* to teach lessons about the possible dangers of glory-seeking. Achilles is used to give warning to those who seek a glorious life; that it may come at the cost of being short-lived. Aeneas shows what can happen to individuals when they go against their better judgment and recklessly seek fame. Hector is used to demonstrate cultural and individual implications of glory-seeking and how those two spheres interact with each other when dealing with the question of glory-seeking.

A culture like this may, in some ways, seem ancient and no longer relevant, but the very same ideals regarding glory-seeking rule the sports world of current day – particularly the NFL. As Dan Le Batard of *The Miami Herald* observes in an interview with legendary defensive lineman Jason Taylor:

As America's most popular sport encounters a liability problem ... as gladiator Junior Seau kills himself with a shotgun blast to the chest and leaves his damaged brain to study ... as awareness and penalties increase around an NFL commissioner confronting the oxymoronic task of making a violent game safe ... and as the rules change but the culture really doesn't ... we think we know this forever-growing monster we are cheering on Sundays. But we don't. We have no earthly idea. Dolphins' legend Jason Taylor, for example, grew up right before our eyes, from a skinny Akron kid to a future Hall of Famer, his very public path out in front of those lights for 15 years. But take a look at what was happening in the dark. He was just a few blessed hours from having his leg amputated. He played games, plural, with a hidden and taped catheter running from his armpit to his heart. His calf was oozing blood for so many months, from September of one year to February of another, that he had to have the equivalent of a drain installed. This is a story of the private pain endured in pursuit of public glory, just one man's broken body on a battlefield littered with thousands of them. As death and depression and dementia addle football's mind, persuading some of the gladiators to kill themselves as a *solution* to end all the pain, and as the media finally shines a light on football's concussed skull at the very iceberg-top of the problem, we begin the anatomy of Taylor's story at the very bottom.²⁸

Taylor – a “warrior” by any modern-day athletic use of the word – is just an example of what lengths NFL players will go to in order to be on the field, playing for their families and their teams. As Le Batard notes, like mostly anyone who has played football, “Taylor hated guys who ‘took up residency’ [in the training room]...he was proud to learn that one of his own quotes has been put up in there: Be a player, not a patient.”²⁹

²⁸ Le Batard, Dan. "Jason Taylor's Pain Shows NFL's World of Hurt." *The Miami Herald*. 13 Jan. 2013. Web. 06 Oct. 2013. <<http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/01/13/v-fullstory/3179926/dan-le-batard-jason-taylors-pain.html>>.

²⁹ Ibid.

It is in this regard that the culture of glory-seeking and honor-seeking at all costs from Homer's time permeates modern athletic culture. Homer may have even foreseen this connection between athletics and warfare – as the funeral games of Book 23 of *The Iliad* provide a less-bloody outlet for glory-seeking warriors. Unfortunately, while today's NFL players may not be stabbing each other with spears, the relationship between glory-seeking at the expense of personal health remains a serious issue. For today's athlete (and yesterday's warrior), it is better to risk one's health to fight on for one's team. When put in the context with the idea of glory-seeking being an inherent part of the human soul, the logic oddly enough follows: If Achilles, Aeneas, and Hector were willing to die in pursuit of glory, honor, and fame, why shouldn't an NFL player with similar motivations risk even something as serious as permanent brain injury in coming back from a concussion too soon?

The truly strange thing is that it really is difficult *not* to admire or promote players with the attitude of Jason Taylor – a player who “would do it all again” even “if he had to sleep on the steps standing up for the next 15 years.”³⁰ There's always been cultural respect or honor – and fame or glory in especially impressive performances – for the injured athlete suiting up to play the game and give all of what they can for their team. Just ask Terrell Owens, who – on a not-quite-recovered broken leg – recorded nine catches for one-hundred and twenty-two yards in a *losing* Super Bowl effort.³¹ Even in a loss – and believe me, the city of Philadelphia does not take losses lightly (especially in

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ ESPN, NFL. “Playing Injured, Owens Still a Handful.” *ESPN.com*. Clayton, John. 6 Feb. 2005. Web. <http://sports.espn.go.com/nfl/playoffs04/columns/story?columnist=clayton_john&id=1985765>.

the Super Bowl!) – Owens was showered with praise for what John Clayton of ESPN called, at the time, an effort that “might have been the most courageous performance in Super Bowl history.”³² Glory, honor, and the respect and admiration of both our peers and the general public matter to us as human beings – and as such, an athlete in a culture of glory-seekers will feed that inherent desire by forgoing what is best for their individual health and play injured. Glory-seeking must, therefore, in some way be an inherent desire of all human beings. Otherwise, warrior cultures would not be championed both in Homeric times and now currently in the modern day. After all, we aren’t barbarians anymore – right?

³² Ibid.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Glory-seeking as Socially Advantageous II: Celebrity Culture

No one man should have all that Power – Kanye West, “Power”, *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy*

Thomas Hobbe’s *The Leviathan* isn’t the only ancient work to observe and comment on glory-seeking as socially advantageous. Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* also has something to offer with regard to how glory-seeking can be used as an advantageous tool amongst others in a society. In observing how modern societies operate today, one can find numerous manifestations of glory-seeking for social advantage. This should not come as a surprise – after all, many societies are built upon the principles set forth by political thinkers like Hobbes and Rousseau, and, of course, all societies are made of humans who, as Plato implies, have a natural part of their souls (thumos) that craves glory.

While many current examples can be found and analyzed regarding glory-seeking, the one that is of most interest to me is how individuals and society navigate the ubiquitous Celebrity Culture that has developed within the United States. What – if anything – would Hobbes and Rousseau have to say about this phenomenon?

While I’m not quite sure how or in what way these political thinkers would answer, given the texts they’ve left behind, I would imagine that the idea of glory-seeking as a tool for social advantage is at the center of whatever that answer ultimately would be. In this way, through applying the thoughts on glory-seeking presented in *The Leviathan* and *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* to glory-seeking phenomena in the

modern world today, the notion of glory-seeking as socially advantageous becomes less of an abstract theory and more of an actualized reality.

Cultural Crossover: Celebrity, Kanye, *The Leviathan*, and *The Origin of Inequality*

Every time I turn on the television, go online, or even casually talk to a friend, it seems that some kind of celebrity is inevitably mentioned within about five minutes. Given that these aren't people that I know personally – but certainly do *know of* – I often wonder why it is that celebrities are a constant topic of conversation and, for many people, celebrity is a social goal to which they aspire. I certainly understand celebrity or glory for being superlatively talented: being the “best” in a society, especially if that “best” has an objective measure (such as dollars, home-runs, albums sold etc.). The truly puzzling aspect of modern celebrity culture for me is why there are a rapidly growing number of people who are *famous for being famous*. That is, they are glorified for being glorified. Just think of any reality TV show star, or perhaps someone specific such as Kim Kardashian – why is it that these seemingly ordinary or otherwise unimpressive people are constant conversation topics worldwide? More interestingly, even when someone is the “best” or at least “good” at something – like Ms. Kardashian's talented-yet-notorious recording artist fiancée Kanye West - why does this *famous for being famous* seemingly add more to their social celebrity than their talent or ability? Why does this intangible glory – whether it is good or bad – seem to socially trump tangible measures of greatness in celebrity culture? Why is it necessary that in order to have a long and successful run as a celebrity (talented or untalented), you must be good at being *famous for being famous*?

I think the answer has to do with glory-seeking and, specifically, the socially advantageous glory-seeking that appears to become intensified within a society of human beings who are all (or at least in part, according to Plato's model of the soul) glory-seekers. As noted by our previous analysis on *The Leviathan* by Thomas Hobbes, Glory and Power – two concepts dependent on a society of others – exist in a continuously growing cycle in which glory can lead to more power and power can lead to more glory, and thus advantage over others in a social setting. In a celebrity culture, however, one gains glory for being the best at gaining glory. In this social glory-seeking context, *being famous for being famous* begins to make a little more sense: celebrities are so highly regarded in our society because, in a world of glory-seekers, they are the “best” at glory-seeking. In *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, post-Enlightenment thinker Jean-Jacques Rousseau further corroborates the Hobbesian theory of glory-seeking as socially advantageous by investigating the glory-based social dynamics that are at the root of modern celebrity culture. The preeminent current example of glory-seeking as social advantageous within modern celebrity culture is recording artist Kanye West – a man who understands and utilizes both Hobbesian glory-power dynamics, as well as takes advantage of Rousseauian glory-based social structures and, ultimately, the celebrity culture which they help create.

In a Hobbesian glory-seeking sense, modern celebrity culture is best understood within the glory-via-power and power-via-glory growth cycle that culminates in social advantage through glory-seeking. “The Power of a Man”, according to Hobbes, “is his present means, to obtain some future apparent Good” (*Leviathan*, Ch. X, Para. 1). The

“Good” that is obtained in the case of celebrity culture is glory and, more specifically, the social advantage that comes from that glory. Likewise, for Hobbes, “Glory... ‘proceedeth from the imagination or conception of our own power, above the power of him that contesteth with us’ (*The Elements of Law*, p. 50).³³ In a world of glory-seekers, those who can seek glory the best will thus have power – they will *be famous for being famous* and be able to use that fame to influence others. Or, as Kanye West, one of most notorious celebrities and master glory-seekers of our time, said in an interview defending his interruption of country-pop singer Taylor Swifts’ acceptance speech at the MTV Music Video Awards in 2009, “I am so credible and so influential and so relevant that I will change things.”³⁴ When asked about if his instinct to speak out at socially inappropriate times (take a minute to Google-search “George Bush”, “Kanye West”, and “Doesn’t Care About Black People” if you need an additional example), Kanye simply responded that, “It’s only led me to complete awesomeness at all times. It’s only led me to awesome truth and awesomeness. Beauty, truth, awesomeness. That’s all it is.”³⁵

Provocative statements and responses like these by West are something that, regardless of whether one may agree or disagree with them, embody what it means to be at the center of modern celebrity culture today – a cyclone of social power and glory. Kanye realizes that he has influence (power) via his celebrity (glory). He realizes that he is awesome (at least to himself) and has no problem expressing that “truth” to a public that helped shape that self-image in the first place. Interestingly enough, it’s probably that

³³ Dunn, John. “The Significance of Hobbes’s Conception of Power.” *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* (2010), 13:2-3, 417-433. Pg. 421, Pg. 424.

³⁴ Caramancia, Jon. “Behind Kanye’s Mask.” *The New York Times*, 11 June. 2013. Web. 09 Feb. 2014.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

self-awareness that offends the public (glory-givers) the most – after all, people don't like to be reminded that someone has social advantage of any kind over them, even if that social advantage is derived from glory and fame freely given by society at large. Moreover and most importantly, quotes and controversial reactions from Kanye's behavior within celebrity culture further evidences that merely being talented doesn't carry the same social magnitude as *being famous for being famous*. That is, there are plenty of talented musicians in the world, but what sets Kanye apart and what gives him social advantage is his ability and willingness to constantly play the glory-seeking game at high-level and thus achieve both power and glory via celebrity culture – to be known and talented, rather than unknown and talented. This is particularly exemplified through the fact that most of his notoriety is obtained from public comments, rather than only album sales. David Samuels of *The Atlantic* explains:

Whatever you think of the many controversies he has ignited, you must admit that Kanye West is at least some kind of musical genius, ranking among the top five producers and the top five rappers of the past decade. (His singing, by contrast, is kind of a joke.) Every one of his five solo albums has gone platinum, and he has sold 30 million digital downloads of his songs, to become one of the most downloaded musical artists of all time. He has won 18 Grammys—the most of any artist in the past 10 years—while serving as a backpack-wearing icon of black nerd chic. Kanye's power resides in his wild creativity and expressiveness, his mastery of form, and his deep and uncompromising attachment to a self-made aesthetic that he expresses through means that are entirely of the moment: rap music, digital downloads, fashion, Twitter, blogs, live streaming video. He is the first true genius of the iPhone era, the Mozart of contemporary American music, intent on using his creative and emotional gifts to express the heartbreaks and fantasies of his audience.³⁶

³⁶ Samuels, David. "American Mozart." *The Atlantic*. Atlantic Media Company, 02 Apr. 2012. Web. 09 Feb. 2014.

As the “first true genius of the iPhone era” – a celebrity who can cash-in on the panoptical presence of social-media and thus increase *fame for being famous* via online buzz about whatever he is saying, thinking, doing, singing, or wearing – Kanye West is able to use glory-seeking to his advantage through the Hobbesian increasing power-via-glory and glory-via-power cycle. In doing so, what becomes socially important (and advantageous) is not necessarily West’s talent as a musician, but the fact that he is constantly able to be the topic of many conversations, often for his non-musical activities. This is the epitome glory-seeking for social advantage and what makes *being famous for being famous* infinitely more valuable in a social sense than merely being talented. After all, all of the talent in the world can’t make people recognize an unknown-but-talented musician – but successful glory-seeking can. Perhaps Kanye is even able to increase his status as a musician through his glory-seeking – owning ends like power and glory certainly can’t hurt when the Grammys are given and new records are released. It is in this regard, West serves as a current case for how the Hobbesian notion of glory-seeking manifests itself in modern celebrity culture.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, a post-Enlightenment thinker who was in many ways a critic of Hobbes, happened to have quite similar and complementary observations of power and glory reacting together within a society – the word he chose to use was “esteem.” Accordingly, his philosophy offers additional insight into the glory-seeking dynamics of modern celebrity culture. In *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* Rousseau depicts the development of a type of primitive celebrity culture:

People grew accustomed to gather in front of their huts or around a large tree; song and dance, true children of love and leisure, became the amusement or rather the

occupation of idle men and women who had flocked together. Each one began to look at the others and to want to be looked at himself, and public esteem had a value. The one who sang or danced the best, the handsomest, the strongest, the most adroit or the most eloquent became the most highly regarded.³⁷

Out of idleness was born entertainment, and out of entertainment, an esteem-based celebrity culture where those “who sang or danced the best” soon “became the most highly regarded.” This, of course, persists in a much larger way today – where what was once a few people standing around trees looking to dole out some praise for entertainment has turned into a full-blown celebrity culture of millions. What remains the same both then and now, however, is the importance of seeking regard (or esteem, or glory) – if the best singer chooses to remain in his or her hut, how can he or she possibly become the most highly regarded? Rousseau saw the public regard via esteem and glory as a road to advantage, observing that “as soon as men had begun mutually to value one another, and the idea of esteem was formed in their minds, each one claimed to have a right to it, and it was no longer possible for anyone to be lacking it with impunity.”³⁸ That is, almost immediately as it is given, the competition to stockpile esteem and glory – and thus social advantage – amongst human beings begins.

Moreover, for the celebrity (or public glory-seeker) both then and now, “It was necessary, for his advantage, to show himself to be something other than what he in fact was.”³⁹ In other words, in order to maintain that publically given-glory, one had to continue to be the entertaining star the public wanted to see. That is, after the performance outside the hut, the singer would now be watched more carefully and by

³⁷ Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*. Trans. Donald A. Cress. Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. 1992. Print. Pg. 49.

³⁸ Ibid, Pg. 49.

³⁹ Ibid, Pg. 54.

more people, even when they weren't singing. This is still true nowadays – as Kanye says in an interview with Steve McQueen, "Life is a performance."⁴⁰ That performance, driven by glory-seeking, does indeed reap socially advantageous rewards, but those rewards may also often come at the detriment of the glory-seeker. Rousseau, like Hobbes and Plato before him, observes that there is a "universal desire for reputation, honors, and preferences, which devours us all...making all men competitors, rivals, or rather enemies."⁴¹ According to Rousseau, it is to this innate glory-seeking desire, "to this ardor for making oneself the topic of conversation, to this furor to distinguish oneself which nearly always keeps us outside ourselves, that we owe what is best and worst among men, our virtues and vices, our sciences and our errors, our conquerors and our philosophers, that is to say, a multitude of bad things against a small number of good ones."⁴² That is, glory-seeking for social advantage or power can often cause more harm than good. This is still true in modern celebrity culture: As Kanye says in his song "Can't Tell Me Nothing": "I feel the pressure, under more scrutiny/And what I do? Act more stupidly."⁴³

However, some are able to navigate the pitfalls of celebrity glory-seeking in a better way than others. Those who can do so certainly become *famous for being famous* by virtue of being "the best" at being a celebrity, which carries a social clout beyond any talent that already contributes to their fame. Kanye West is someone who takes advantage

⁴⁰ McQueen, Steve. "Kanye West - Page - Interview Magazine." *Interview Magazine*. Interview Magazine, 20 Jan. 2014. Web. 09 Feb. 2014.

⁴¹ Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*. Trans. Donald A. Cress. Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. 1992. Print. Pg. 67.

⁴² Ibid, Pg. 67.

⁴³ West, Kanye, perf. "Can't Tell Me Nothing." Rec. 5 Sept. 2007. *Graduation*. Kanye West. Kanye West, 2007. CD.

of the glory-based social structures observed by Rousseau by injecting a powerful sense of ownership over the negativity that a public including “haters” direct his way. In doing so, he is able to not only accelerate the Hobbesian power-via-glory/glory-via-power cycle for himself, but also navigate Rousseauian concepts of power and reputation as well.

For Rousseau, similarly to Hobbes, “the words *power* and *reputation*” [or glory] are deeply meaningful to the “type of men who place some value on the regard the rest of the world has for them, and who know how to be happy and content with themselves on the testimony of others rather than their own.”⁴⁴ This living solely for the opinions of others, as mentioned before, can certainly be a destructive way to seek glory, but that is precisely where Kanye diverges from many celebrities and it is ultimately what makes him successful and socially advantaged as glory-seeker: though he seeks glory through others in his celebrity status, he does so with an authentic self-aware swagger (perhaps even in a Sartrean “good faith”) that keeps him afloat. Kanye West himself explains:

I don't have some type of romantic relationship with the public. I'm like, the anti-celebrity, and my music comes from a place of being anti...[On the other hand,] it's always going to be 80 percent, at least, what I want to give, and 20 percent fulfilling a perception. If you walk into an old man's house, they're not giving nothing. They're at 100 percent exactly what they want to do. I would hear stories about Steve Jobs and feel like he was at 100 percent exactly what he wanted to do, but I'm sure even a Steve Jobs has compromised. Even a Rick Owens has compromised. You know, even a Kanye West has compromised....I think what Kanye West is going to mean is something similar to what Steve Jobs means. I am undoubtedly, you know, Steve of Internet, downtown, fashion, culture. Period. By a long jump. I honestly feel that because Steve has passed, you know, it's like when Biggie passed and Jay-Z was allowed to become Jay-Z. I've been connected to the most culturally important albums of the past four years, the most influential artists of the past ten years...I will be the leader of a company that ends up being

⁴⁴ Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*. Trans. Donald A. Cress. Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. 1992. Print. Pg. 70.

worth billions of dollars, because I got the answers. I understand culture. I am the nucleus.⁴⁵

Kanye is nothing if not confident, but it's the simultaneous earnestness and craftiness of his confidence that makes him the "best" glory-seeker in modern celebrity culture – the one most equipped to *be famous for being famous*. First and foremost, Kanye is realistic about fulfilling a perception and not being fully himself. Rousseau observed that the original hut-and-tree village celebrities even had to be something they weren't in order to maintain the stream of glory they were enjoying – Kanye takes that notion and flips it into a powerful, realistic, and oddly relatable embrace of his status as an "anti-celebrity." In doing so he allows his power to dictate his glory, not his glory to dictate his power, even while increasing both in a Hobbesian cycle.

Additionally, Kanye strategically aligns himself with other successful names routinely in public comments, such as Steve Jobs, Rick Owens, and The Notorious B.I.G. He's not even ashamed to do so – when asked if he name-drops in order to appear more powerful, he responded in the affirmative, declaring, "I want the power to create what is in my mind. That's my dream. I want to be able to have a thought or an idea and bring it into reality."⁴⁶ Again, this raw honesty and self-awareness is what allows Kanye to maintain his social advantage via glory-seeking. It is his vulnerable-yet-authentic-but-certainly-bombastic method that brings him so many fans and so many "haters" – either way he is being talked about by everyone and is authentic in his pursuit to make this happen. According to our previous analysis on Jean-Paul Sartre, that would mean Kanye

⁴⁵ Caramancia, Jon. "Behind Kanye's Mask." *The New York Times*, 11 June. 2013. Web. 09 Feb. 2014.

⁴⁶ McQueen, Steve. "Kanye West - Page - Interview Magazine." *Interview Magazine*. Interview Magazine, 20 Jan. 2014. Web. 09 Feb. 2014.

seeks glory for social advantage in “good faith” – that is, he is grounded and realistic about responding to the expectations of a socially ungrounded and surrealistic celebrity culture – and that is precisely what makes him successful in gaining and maintain the sought-after Hobbesian social advantage fueled by his glory-seeking soul. And that intricate understanding of the art of glory-seeking within a society is what’s truly impressive about him – even as a talented musician, he is *famous for being famous*.

Ultimately, what makes Kanye the preeminent current example of glory-seeking as social advantageous within modern celebrity culture is that he is a man who understands and utilizes both Hobbesian glory-power dynamics and Rousseauian glory-based social structures: Hobbesian glory-power dynamics being two concepts dependent on a society of others existing in a continuously growing cycle and Rousseauian glory-based social structures being the public-esteem-based celebrity culture that grows out of idleness and entertainment. In this way, in a celebrity culture, those who can seek glory the best (and thus attain it) are at a social advantage over others – this gives them power, which in turn adds to their glorified status as celebrities via fame. Thus, *being famous for being famous* can be understood as being the “best” at glory-seeking in a world of glory-seekers – thus gaining social advantage. In modern times, one of the best at this trade is Kanye West – as Jon Caramancia of *The New York Times* observes:

No rapper has embodied hip-hop’s often contradictory impulses of narcissism and social good quite as [Kanye], and no producer has celebrated the lush and the ornate quite as he has. He has spent most of his career in additive mode, figuring out how to make music that’s majestic and thought-provoking and grand-scaled. And he’s also widened the genre’s gates, whether for middle-class values or high-fashion and high-art dreams. At the same time, he’s been a frequent lightning rod for controversy, a bombastic figure who can count ranking two presidents among

his achievements, along with being a reliably dyspeptic presence at award shows (when he attends them).⁴⁷

It's all of this news and notoriety that keeps Kanye in the spotlight, but it's his honest-rebel-attitude and know-how of glory-seeking that gain and maintain his socially advantage. Through his incredible navigation of celebrity culture, putting both Hobbesian glory-power dynamics and Rousseauian glory-based social structures to work for his benefit, Kanye West has gained much social glory and a lot of celebrity power. Perhaps there is some truth what Kanye meant when he said – "I am the nucleus."

⁴⁷ Caramancia, Jon. "Behind Kanye's Mask." *The New York Times*, 11 June 2013.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Glory-seeking as an Answer to Existential Angst II: Social Media

In order that everything should be reduced to the same level, it is first of all necessary to procure a phantom, its spirit, a monstrous abstraction, an all-embracing something which is nothing, a mirage – and that phantom is *the public* – Søren Kierkegaard, *The Present Age*

There are many existential works that provide insight into glory-seeking as a cure for existential angst and way in which to ultimately matter. Alongside Jean-Paul Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* and *Nausea*, Søren Kierkegaard's *The Present Age* also has something to offer with regards to the existential importance of glory-seeking. Upon observing current societies and the individuals who inhabit them, one can find numerous manifestations of glory-seeking and, with closer examination, evidence of its prevalence as well. This may or may not come as a surprise – after all, Kierkegaard and Sartre made their observations not so long ago.

While many current examples can be found and analyzed regarding glory-seeking, the one that primarily comes to mind for me in an existential sense is the panoptical presence of social media and how our glory-seeking souls navigate online communities. What – if anything – would Sartre and Kierkegaard have to say about this phenomenon?

While I'm not quite sure exactly how or in what way these existential thinkers would respond, given the texts they've left behind, I would imagine that the idea of glory-seeking as a cure for existential angst would play a large role in the answer. In this way, through applying the thoughts on glory-seeking presented in *The Present Age*, *Being*

and Nothingness, and *Nausea* to glory-seeking phenomena in the modern world today, the notion of glory-seeking as an existentially inherent and advantageous part of the human condition becomes less of an abstract theory and more of an actualized reality.

Cultural Crossover: Social Media, *The Present Age*, and *Being & Nothingness*

Perhaps the largest contribution my generation (those born in the 1990's who grew up alongside the internet) has to society is social media. Between Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and, of course, Facebook, the modern individual is nearly required to have an online persona of some sort these days – even my parents and grandparents are on Facebook! What is of interest to me, however, are all the odd needs, impulses, pitfalls, and feelings that social media causes for both those around me and myself: Why is it that when I go to a bar (or anywhere) with my friends that they take dozens of pictures to immediately upload to Facebook or Instagram? Or when something noteworthy happens in the news, why is it that seemingly everyone with internet access (myself included) feels the need put out a Facebook status or Twitter tweet offering their two-cents on New and Noteworthy Media Event X?

I think the answer has to do with glory-seeking and, specifically, the existential glory-seeking that grows from this innate need that people seem to have: wanting to ultimately matter. Where better to chase that feeling than a limitless world of virtual peers who can serve as readily available judges of what one says and, by extension, how much one matters? However, as noted by the previous investigation on the writings of Jean-Paul Sartre, there are both good (authentic, good faith) and bad (inauthentic, bad faith) ways to glory-seek within an existential context. In a virtual world brimming with

“Others” who are “looking,” one must truly be careful not to become a prisoner to others – and to oneself – in the process of feeding his or her glory-seeking soul via the seemingly socially advantageous forum of social media.

The Panopticon – a circular penitentiary containing a “tower with windows that could peer into every prisoner’s cell”⁴⁸ at the center – was a total-surveillance penal system proposed by English philosopher Jeremy Bentham near the end of the eighteenth-century. Its name is derived from the Greek legend of Argus Panoptes, the goddess Hera’s one-hundred eyed watchman, who, as his name suggests, was “all-seeing.”⁴⁹ Twentieth-century French philosopher Michel Foucault further expanded on Bentham’s Panopticon, essentially theorizing that the mere “presumption of surveillance would make real surveillance unnecessary,” thus making each member of the Panopticon “a prisoner of his own watchfulness.”⁵⁰

In modern societies around the world, public surveillance is essentially inescapable – it is nearly impossible to walk into a building now without seeing a video camera. However, more intriguingly, surveillance is expanding further, pushing into once-private realms via the self-provided, carefully-crafted, and publically-personal pages of social media. Through the countless Tweets, Facebook pages, Instagram updates, and YouTube videos available online, people everywhere are now able to peer into the digitally-doctored lives of those around them. Knowing others will also be peering back at them through these channels of social media, individuals soon become

⁴⁸ Boxer, Sarah. “Beating Surveillance: Don’t Care, Just Laugh.” *The New York Times* 4 July 1998: Pg. 7. *LexisNexis Academic*. Web. 1 Nov. 2013.

⁴⁹ Ibid, Pg. 7.

⁵⁰ Ibid, Pg. 7.

prisoners to their projected public personae, presenting themselves on these online forums in an inauthentic-yet-socially-appealing manner. Social media, in this regard, is very much a modern Panopticon in which all who participate are in danger of becoming prisoner to their own existential anxiety, submitting to the watchful eyes of others, in fear of their own freedom in the face of existential awareness, through inauthentic living both online and offline.

Inauthentic-versus-authentic living (and by extension, inauthentic-versus-authentic glory-seeking) with respect to the question of existential anxiety is a problem that greatly concerned thinkers such as Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard and French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre. Consequently, their ideas are quite relevant to any inquiry into the panoptical role of social media in modern society. For Kierkegaard, social media can be understood as a digital manifestation of “the public,”⁵¹ a universal forum in which the normative ethics of society are communicated. For Sartre, social media is a sort of method in which humans beings can “escape all that they are”⁵² and participate in play-acting. The panoptical presence of social media thus makes it easier for humans to participate in inauthentic living (bad faith glory-seeking) – fearfully fleeing from existential anxiety rather than willfully facing and embracing the awareness of one’s own existence and freedom in the world, and thereby living authentically (good faith glory-seeking).

⁵¹ Kierkegaard, Søren. “The Present Age.” *Existentialism*. Comp. Robert C. Solomon. Second ed. New York: Oxford UP, 2005. Pg. 3-6. Print. Pg. 6.

⁵² Sartre, Jean-Paul. “Being & Nothingness.” *Basic Writings of Existentialism*. Ed. Gordon Marino. New York: Modern Library, 2004. 370-90. Print. Pg. 383.

In a Kierkegaardian sense, social media is essentially a technological expression of “the public.”⁵³ In his work, *The Present Age* (1846), Kierkegaard describes “the public” as “a gruesome abstraction by which the individual receives his religious characterization – or sinks.”⁵⁴ That is, the public is “an all-embracing something which is nothing,”⁵⁵ a faceless phantom informing each singular individual of the dogmatic norms expected of them by their universal society – what Kierkegaard derisively refers to as “the crowd” (which, for him, is the bearer of untruth).⁵⁶ In “the age of advertisement and publicity,” for Kierkegaard, “nothing ever happens, but there is instantaneous publicity everywhere.”⁵⁷

This panoptical notion of “instantaneous publicity everywhere” effectively describes the current state of social media, as scholar Dhiraj Murthy explains regarding the social media site Twitter:

Kierkegaard’s argument, however, is critically important to understanding Twitter. There is definitely an ‘immediate publicity everywhere’...in that everything from one’s daily happenings or musings become part of a publicity-driven culture. In a sense, Twitter markets us through our tweets and, as such, shifts us more towards ‘an age of advertisement,’ where we are not necessarily advertising products, but rather ourselves (and our self-commodification). As research has shown the amount of followers or friends one has on social media websites factors into how we perceive ourselves. And, following the inverse, cyber-bullying has the real potential to harm or even destroy one’s self-image.⁵⁸

⁵³ Kierkegaard, Søren. “The Present Age.” *Existentialism*. Comp. Robert C. Solomon. Second ed. New York: Oxford UP, 2005. Pg. 3-6. Print. Pg. 6.

⁵⁴ Ibid, Pg. 6.

⁵⁵ Ibid, Pg. 6.

⁵⁶ Ibid, Kierkegaard, Søren. “Concerning the Dedication of ‘The Individual’”, Pg. 32.

⁵⁷ Ibid, Kierkegaard, Søren. “The Present Age”, Pg. 4.

⁵⁸ Murthy, Dhiraj. “Towards a Sociological Understanding of Social Media: Theorizing Twitter.” *SAGE Journals*. Sociology, 24 Sept. 2012. Web. 1 Nov. 2013.

It is in this way that the panoptical omnipresence and public treatment of social media sites such as Twitter make inauthentic living easier, shifting society further into an “age of advertisement” where users themselves are commoditized in bad faith with self-indulgent statistics like “number of followers.” In other words, through social media one can digitally “flee for refuge into the crowd, and so flee in cowardice from being an individual”⁵⁹ – essentially dealing with the Nausea of existential awareness through bad faith glory-seeking, away from shame and towards a false-pride. Thus, in a Kierkegaardian sense, social media is ultimately a technological version of the inauthentic “public,” in effect serving as a medium through which people are able to fearfully flee in bad faith from any existential anxiety garnered by their individuality, rather than willfully face and embrace (in good faith) the awareness of their own existence and freedom in the world. Social media, in this regard, can contribute towards a failure of someone to exercise their ability to break apart from Kierkegaard’s “crowd” and, therefore, seek glory authentically in the virtual Panopticon as well as beyond it.

Social media, from a Sartrean perspective, is a way in which humans beings can participate in play-acting and “escape all that they are.”⁶⁰ In his work, *Being and Nothingness* (1943), Sartre establishes play-acting as a manifestation of bad faith where a human’s efforts and judgments “all aim at establishing that they are not what they are.”⁶¹ Today, there is no better stage on which to play-act than the Panopticon of social media,

⁵⁹ Kierkegaard, Søren. “Concerning the Dedication to ‘The Individual’.” *Existentialism*. Comp. Robert C. Solomon. Second ed. New York: Oxford UP, 2005. Pg. 3-6. Pg. 32-33. Print. Pg. 32.

⁶⁰ Sartre, Jean-Paul. “Being & Nothingness.” *Basic Writings of Existentialism*. Ed. Gordon Marino. New York: Modern Library, 2004. 370-90. Print. Pg. 383.

⁶¹ Ibid, Pg. 383.

where one's potential audience – virtual conduits of the glory-that-is-sought – is virtually limitless. With personally-provided, carefully-crafted, and digitally-doctored Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram social media pages, human beings may readily become anything they want online – they can “flee from themselves, escape themselves, leaving their tattered garments in the hand of the fault-finders.”⁶² That is, social media allows for human beings to escape the real and true aspects of themselves they dislike in favor of a more agreeable public façade – this is the crux of bad faith glory-seeking towards false-pride. This impulse to play-act can also be understood in terms of dealing with Sartre's notion of “the look” of “the Other”, a concept that scholar Michael Peters explains:

‘The look’ is part of the examination by Sartre of avoiding deep Cartesian problems of solipsism that originate from a standpoint devoted entirely to the *cogito*, or the thinking subject. Sartre argues that we need the Other in order to realize our own being...Sartre's account of the look and the Other as someone who must be encountered...defines an ontology defining consciousness as a negation aimed fundamentally at freedom formed through the choices we make...‘The look’ in Sartre's philosophy brings into play an intersubjective world and, indeed, the realm of interpersonal relations.⁶³

It is in this context that social media takes on a panoptical distinctiveness – where “looks” are coming from every direction from a countless number of “Others.” Thus, the treatment of social media makes the human impulse towards inauthentic living, or bad faith glory-seeking, easier. Social media in this way acts, in a Sartrean sense, as a sort of twisted looking-glass through which one is able to facilitate what exactly about them will be looked-at by “the Others” who are always looking-on. This medium towards “bad faith” via play-acting keeps man away from authenticity, or being what he “really is” – as

⁶² Ibid, Pg. 383.

⁶³ Peters, Michael A. “Pedagogies of the Image: Economies of the Gaze.” *Analysis and Metaphysics* Vol. 9 (2010): Pg. 42-61. *Academic OneFile*. Web. 1 Nov. 2013. Pg. 45-46.

Sartre explains, “If man is what he is, bad faith is forever impossible and candor ceases to be his ideal and becomes instead his being.”⁶⁴ In a Sartrean context, social media provides a grand and virtual stage on which human beings can play-act, allowing them to readily flee from the nauseous anxiety of existential awareness in bad faith. By “leaving their tattered garments in the hands” of the on-looking “Others”, human beings can effectively use social media to partake in inauthentic living – bad faith glory-seeking towards false-pride – through play-acting rather than willfully facing and embracing the awareness of their own existence and freedom in the world, “becoming instead their being”, and thus living – and seeking glory – authentically in good faith.

Ultimately, the Panopticon of social media is a virtual world that must be navigated carefully if one is to remain authentic while seeking glory. Modern social media is essentially inescapable – one cannot reasonably be expected to shun virtual connectivity completely and still somehow manage to function practically in a modern world that is increasingly dependent on these important, albeit inauthentic, connections. Therefore, what is most important in an existential sense is that, in the process of participating in social media, one never forgets the inauthentic dangers of the medium that one is using. As modern individuals navigate the virtual voyeurism of digitally-doctored, carefully-crafted, and self-supplied Tweets, Facebook pages, Instagram updates, and YouTube videos available online, they must continuously choose to respond to their glory-seeking souls authentically (in good faith) rather than inauthentically (in bad faith). While modern individuals cannot readily escape the virtual Panopticon of

⁶⁴ Sartre, Jean-Paul. “Being & Nothingness.” *Basic Writings of Existentialism*. Ed. Gordon Marino. New York: Modern Library, 2004. 370-90. Print. Pg. 385.

social media – the preeminent modern forum for glory-seeking – they must never forget that it is they themselves that constantly makes the choice to be a prisoner of their own watchfulness or not: either by seeking glory in bad faith and submitting to the perceived watchfulness of “the public” or “the crowd” or “the Other” in fear of the freedom to be oneself; or by willfully facing and embracing the perils of the Panopticon of social media in good faith, armed with authentic autonomy. Judging from their writings, Søren Kierkegaard and Jean-Paul Sartre would both agree – the choice between authentic living and inauthentic living in any social context is ultimately each individual’s and each individual’s alone to make. Thus, in the end, for every individual, there is only but one important question that remains regarding how to navigate his or her glory-seeking soul: Should I seek glory in good faith or bad faith?

CHAPTER NINE

Why Does Glory-seeking Matter?

Through this collective analysis on the thoughts and writings of Plato, Thomas Hobbes, Jean-Paul Sartre, Homer, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Søren Kierkegaard, and the modern examples of the NFL, Celebrity Culture, and Social Media, we can conclude that glory-seeking does indeed matter as an inherent, socially advantageous, and existentially important force to be reckoned with throughout the human experience.

For Plato, glory-seeking is an inherent part of the human condition. It is an innate portion of the tri-partite soul (*thumos*) that must navigate itself alongside its siblings: appetite (*eros*) and reason (*logos*). Through both Homer's *Iliad* and the be-a-player-not-a-patient culture surrounding injuries in the National Football League today, glory-seeking (*thumos*) has been shown as an intrinsic desire that, if let run wild, can usurp both *eros* and *logos* in physically dangerous ways.

For Hobbes, glory-seeking is a socially advantageous tool to be used in the natural state of war mankind finds itself in. Drawing from the innateness of glory-seeking as established by Plato, further analysis on Hobbes provided a picture of a society in which all members are at least, in part, glory-seekers, meaning that both glory and power can be derived for those who seek glory the best – those can win the natural state of war that pits glory-seeker against glory-seeker. Extending this picture to modernity, alongside the esteem-based social-structures established by Rousseau in *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, celebrity culture serves as a chief glory-seeking forum in the present-day where those who are the best at glory-seeking in a society of glory-seekers (such as

Kanye West) can become *famous for being famous*, achieving both power-through-glory and glory-through-power as long as they can maintain.

In a Sartrean sense, glory-seeking provides an answer to existential angst – either as a short-term, inauthentic cure to Nausea through bad faith glory-seeking, or a long-term, authentic solution through good faith glory-seeking. Extending the analysis from Plato (innate) and Hobbes (socially advantageous), glory-seeking becomes existentially important through *how* one chooses to glory-seek – either in good or bad faith. In the present day, (and also *The Present Age*) both the writings of Kierkegaard and Sartre (*Being and Nothingness*) offer insight on how to navigate the modern virtual panopticon of glory-seekers: social media.

That is the basic (and hopefully well-established) theory at this point: glory-seeking matters because it is an inherent, socially advantageous, and existentially important force within each and every human experience. Still though, some questions remain to be addressed with regards to this glory-seeking theory established from my analysis on Plato, Hobbes, Sartre, their contemporaries, and the chosen modern manifestations. Perhaps the largest, and somewhat all-encompassing question is this: given that glory-seeking exists as both an individual and social phenomenon, how should one live in awareness of it? In other words: *How does glory-seeking matter to me and where am I supposed to go from here?*

I think the best way to answer these remaining questions is to focus on recognition, appropriation, and authenticity – valued concepts that correspond respectively to the already established innateness, social advantage, and existential

importance of glory-seeking. Hopefully, these value-judgments of how each previously discussed component of glory-seeking should be approached will help shed light onto how glory-seeking as a whole should be navigated.

First and foremost, it is important to establish recognition of glory-seeking as an inherent part of the human soul. Perhaps the question of “Should I even bother seeking glory at all?” crossed your mind while reading this work, especially given the numerous individually and social destructive examples that stem from this innate glory-seeking desire. However, this is wrong question to ask and the analysis on Plato’s tripartite soul should tell you why – you’re doomed to glory-seeking. It is hard-wired into the human condition. There is no escape. There is no choice not to, on some level, reconcile this innate impulse with how one lives. However, if there is one thing to take away from this work, it should be that glory-seeking (*thumos*) is a very real, impossibly inescapable, and possibly dangerous force within the soul if allowed to overpower its siblings *eros* and *logos* – take the overly appetitive and thumotic tyrant in *The Republic* as an example. Even for those who are ruled primarily by *logos*, *thumos* still plays a part in their daily decision-making and thus is an inescapable ingredient to the human condition. Given this Platonic framework, each and every human being will be forced to negotiate *thumos* and glory-seeking in various ways throughout their lives. As the modern example of injury culture in the NFL, as well as the analysis on glory-seeking in Homer’s *Iliad* showed, glory-seeking is something that can lead to one’s downfall if not properly controlled. Thus, it is imperative to recognize glory-seeking as an inherent part of the human soul and consequently examine its role in daily decision-making. This is not to say that

thumos and glory-seeking are bad – there are plenty of individually and socially positive uses of *thumos* such as being a soldier-guardian within Plato’s *Republic* or taking some pride in one’s individual accomplishments and oneself. However, as the charioteer’s image in the *Phaedrus* demonstrates, *thumos* is at its best when directed by *logos* and running side-by-side with *eros*. The chariot, or human soul at-large, is at its best when all parts are working together in harmony – when the two strong horses of *thumos* and *eros* are recognized and guided thoughtfully by *logos*. It is in this regard that recognition of glory-seeking for what it is – an inherent and inescapable part of the human soul that each and every human must negotiate in some way – is the first and most crucial step in answering how glory-seeking matters for each individual as they move forward in life. After all, it is quite difficult to go anywhere with a broken chariot that had its horses run away.

Secondly and more expansively, it is important to appropriate glory-seeking for social advantage. Given the innateness established by Plato, further analysis from Hobbes painted a society in which all members are at least in part glory-seekers, pitting all-against-all in a natural state of war for the prized and self-perpetuating ends of glory and power. Judicious appropriation becomes important in this framework because not all methods of glory-seeking for social advantage is ultimately a good thing for the soul itself. That is, the process of glory-seeking for socially advantageous glory and power can often lead to detrimental behavior towards oneself and others if not appropriated properly. Glory is the third principle of quarrel amongst men according to Hobbes’s *Leviathan*. While winning a quarrel is certainly better than losing one, not quarreling in

the first place is the optimal choice. Even if quarrel is inevitable (as a world of people who are at least in part glory-seekers would suggest) there are definitely more effective and less effective methods of glory-seeking for social advantage over others. For example, rather than the warlike violence of the Greek military or the NFL, modern celebrity culture offers a physically harmless outlet through which one can glory-seek to their own social advantage. Born out of idleness and the innate desire to seek glory, as observed by Rousseau in *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, celebrity culture provides an entertaining, safe, and public forum in which each driven glory-seeker can compete for both glory and power, and, consequently social advantage. In this way, through proper appropriation, glory-seeking can become less of a war and more of a game. Today, Kanye West is one of the best at this glory-seeking game – someone who is not only an incredibly talented musician, but someone who understands the cyclically growing power and social advantage that comes with attaining and, more importantly maintaining, *fame for being famous*. Thus, appropriation away from thumotic violence and towards glory-driven entertainment is a good social outlet for Hobbesian glory-seeking. However, glory-seeking also needs to be appropriated internally as part of the search for authenticity.

Finally and ultimately, it is existentially important to seek glory authentically. Whether one is an NFL athlete, a Greek warrior, a Hobbesian natural man, a modern celebrity, a user of social media, or simply a human being, both the individually and socially optimal way for the soul to fulfill its thumotic drive for glory is to seek it authentically in good faith. As the analysis of Sartre indicates, like anything in life, glory-

seeking itself is subject to choice – in this case a choice between inauthentic, bad faith glory-seeking and authentic, good faith glory-seeking. Bad faith glory-seeking, derived from the concepts of play-acting and the look of the Other presented in *Being and Nothingness* and *Nausea*, is a short-term solution to the omnipresent ontological Nausea of existential awareness – it is a fleeting way to feel fulfilled and feel as though one matters through an inauthentic false-pride wholly dependent on averting shame in the presence of Others. Good faith glory-seeking, on the other hand, is a long-term solution to existential angst – it is a sustentative method to deal with ontological Nausea and truly feel as though one matters, an authentic true-pride derived from the respect of Others but ultimately dependent on how one views oneself. That is, the motivation of why and how one acts within various social forums – such as the modern panopticon of social media derived in part from Kierkegaard's *The Present Age* – is essentially what separates good faith glory-seeking from bad faith glory-seeking. The section on social media ended with the question: Should I seek glory in good faith or bad faith? I believe, as the concept of authenticity would suggest, that glory should be sought in good faith. Moreover, in the process of pursuing glory authentically and in good faith, one also upholds the values of appropriation of social advantage (Hobbes) and recognition of innateness (Plato). That is, authentic glory-seeking is both socially and existentially advantageous because it allows one to live authentically and consequently to appropriate any advantages gained from the innate, thumotic drive to seek glory. Authentic glory-seeking, thus, existentially matters and ultimately matters most because it allows for human beings to overcome the inherent and inescapable problem of human existence – the ontological Nausea of existential

awareness – and navigate that problem and, as a result, the other Platonic and Hobbesian aspects of glory-seeking in a positive way.

So: *How does glory-seeking matter to me and where am I supposed to go from here?* Ultimately, glory-seeking matters because it is inherent, socially advantageous, and existentially important for every single human being. Through an adherence to the corresponding respective values of recognition, appropriation, and, most importantly, authenticity, glory-seeking as a whole can be optimally navigated for each and every human being. That is where, I hope, one strives to go after reading this work: a recognition of glory-seeking's innateness, a thoughtful appropriation of how to use it for social advantage, and an authentic choice to seek glory in good faith. Given our entire investigation on glory-seeking for Plato, Hobbes, Sartre, Homer, Rousseau, Kierkegaard, the NFL, celebrity culture, and social media, my final recommendation for how one should live in light of his or her inherent, socially advantageous, and existentially important glory-seeking soul is this: Authentic living marked by recognition of the composition of one's soul and appropriation of how to satisfy it at both the individual and social levels. The choice to follow that recommendation, of course, is yours – the charioteer *logos* must never forget that he or she alone has the choice and the power to harness *thumos* and *eros*...or let them run wild and crash.

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